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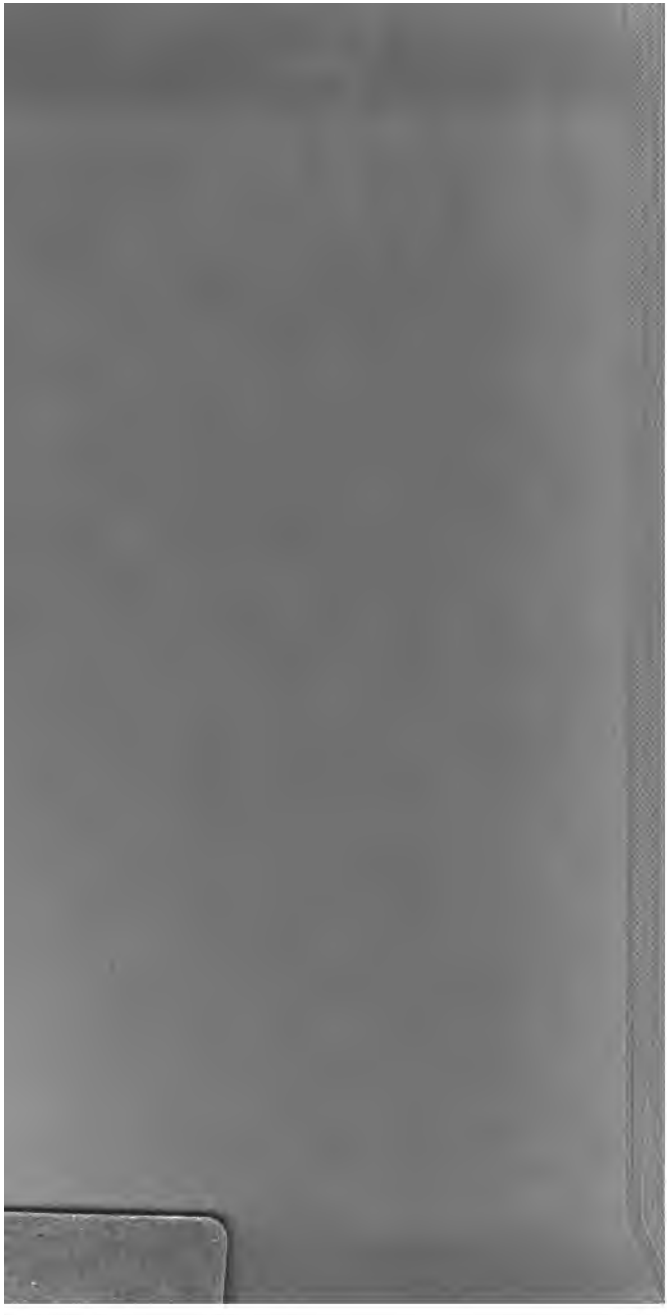

Substance

SEK

SUBSTANCE

OF THE

DEBATES

ON

A RESOLUTION FOR ABOLISHING THE

Slave Trade,

WHICH WAS MOVED

IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS

On the 10th June, 1806,

AND

IN THE HOUSE OF LORDS

On the 24th June, 1806.

WITH

AN APPENDIX,

CONTAINING

NOTES AND ILLUSTRATIONS.

LONDON:

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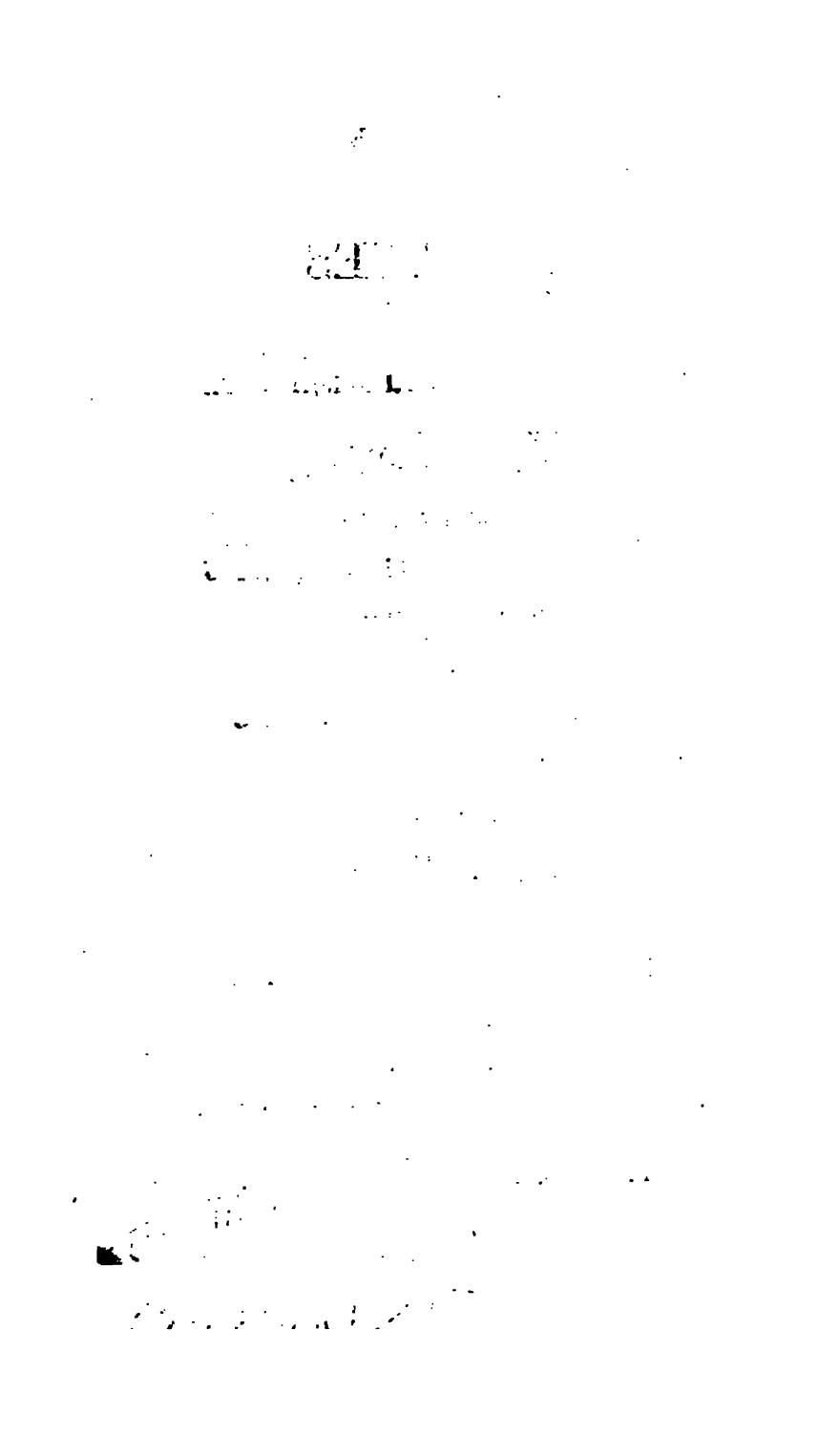

PREFACE.

THE following pages contain a faithful Report, though in a more compreſſed form than that in which they were delivered, of the Speeches made in both Houſes of Parliament, on a reſolution having been moved expreſſive of a determination to aboliſh the Slave Trade. It ſeemed to be highly deſirable to preſerve the ſubſtance of theſe ſpeeches, as a record of the opinions which, after near twenty years of deliberation and enquiry, were entertained by our greateſt Stateſmen, on one of the moſt momentous queſtions which perhaps ever agitated a Legiſlative Aſſembly.

To the Debates ſome Notes have been ſubjoined, for the purpoſe of illuſtrating the important ſubject under diſcuſſion. It will be obvious to the intelligent reader, that theſe notes embrace but a very limited ſelection from the vaſt maſs of elucidatory matter which might have been brought to bear on this queſtion. To thoſe, however, who are not ſatisfied with the ſcanty portion of evidence which has been introduced into the Appendix, the references, there inſerted, will be of uſe in pointing out additional ſources of authentic information.

In

In looking forward to the approaching ſeſſion of Par- , it may afford ſome encouragement to thoſe who are ſolicitous to ſee a period put to the Britiſh Slave Trade, to know preciſely what meaſures have been recently adopted with a view to the immediate limitation and ultimate extinction of this gigantic evil.

A bill was brought into Parliament, as early in the laſt ſeſſion as the circumſtances of the country would permit, for cutting off ſome very important branches of this traffic. Its object was threefold: Firſt, to give effect to the Order of Council which had been iſſued at the cloſe of the laſt year, prohibiting, with certain defined exceptions, the importation of ſlaves into the colonies conquered by the Britiſh arms during the preſent war. Second, to prohibit Britiſh ſubjects from being engaged in importing ſlaves into the colonies of any foreign power, whether hoſtile or neutral. Third, to prohibit Britiſh ſubjects and Britiſh capital from being employed in carrying on, or aſſiſting to carry on, a Slave Trade in foreign ſhips; and alſo to prevent the outfit of foreign ſlave ſhips from Britiſh ports. This bill was carried through both Houſes of Parliament, by large majorities, and has paſſed into a law. *

During the diſcuſſions to which this meaſure gave birth, both Lord GRENVILLE and Mr. FOX, declared in ſubſtance, that *they felt the queſtion of the Slave Trade to be one which involves the deareſt intereſts of humanity, and the moſt urgent claims of policy, juſtice, and religion; and that, ſhould they ſucceed in effecting its abolition, they would regard that ſucceſs as entailing more true glory on their adminiſtration, and more honour and advantage on their country, than any other tranſaction in which they could be engaged.*

* An Order of Council has extended the prohibitions of this Act to the recently captured colony of Buenos Ayres.

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It had, for important reaſons, been thought beſt by the Parliamentary friends of this cauſe, that the prohibition of the foreign branches of the Slave Trade ſhould, if poſſible, precede a renewal, at this juncture, of their efforts for a total abolition; and before the Foreign Slave Trade bill had paſſed through all its ſtages, the ſeſſion was judged to be too far advanced to admit of bringing forward, with any fair hope of ſucceſs, a bill for the more comprehenſive object. But although it evidently became a meaſure of prudence to poſtpone that attempt till another ſeſſion, it ſeemed highly deſirable that both Houſes of Parliament ſhould, if poſſible, be prevailed upon to admit and avow thoſe ſacred principles on which the propriety of the total abolition of this commerce is chiefly founded, —principles long ſince indeed expreſsly acknowledged by the Commons, but reſpecting which the Upper Houſe had hitherto declared no opinion;—and that they ſhould give a ſolemn pledge to the public that they would proceed, without any unneceſſary delay, to the inveſtigation of the great practical queſtions which remain to be decided. A reſolution was therefore moved in both Houſes ſucceſſively, by Mr. Fox and Lord GRENVILLE, to the following effect: "*That conceiving the African Slave Trade* "*to be contrary to the principles of juſtice, humanity, and ſound* "*policy, this Houſe will, with all practicable expedition, take* "*meaſures to aboliſh it, in ſuch manner, and at ſuch time, as* "*ſhall be thought adviſeable.*"

This motion gave riſe to the debates which are reported in the following pages, and which iſſued in its adoption by both Houſes. In the Houſe of Commons it was carried by 114 to 15, and in the Houſe of Lords by 41 to 20.

Both Houſes alſo concurred in addreſſing His Majeſty, that he would be graciouſly pleaſed to negociate with Foreign Powers, for the purpoſe of procuring their concurrence

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currence in effecting a general Abolition of the African Slave Trade.

It was much to be feared, however, that theſe various meaſures, while they gave a ſatisfactory pledge to the friends of the oppreſſed Negro race, that a termination would, at no diſtant period, be put to their ſufferings; would in the mean time infuſe new vigour and activity into the ſpeculations of the man-merchant, and greatly aggravate the miſeries of Africa. To obviate an effect ſo much to be deprecated as this, an Act was paſſed to prevent, for the preſent, the increaſe of the Slave Trade, by enacting, that from and after the 1ſt day of Auguſt, 1806, no veſſel ſhall be permitted to clear out for the Slave Trade, unleſs ſuch veſſel ſhall have been previouſly employed in the ſaid trade by the ſame owner or owners, or ſhall be proved, to the ſatisfaction of Commiſſioners appointed for that purpoſe, to have been contracted for before the 10th of June, 1806, for the purpoſe of being employed in that trade; under a penalty of £50 for each Slave which ſhall be carried from the Coaſt of Africa contrary to this Act. An exception was made in the ſingle caſe of perſons whoſe veſſels may have been captured by the enemy ſubſequently to the 1ſt of January, 1806, and who may have goods remaining on the Coaſt, or debts due to them there. Such perſons were allowed to replace the tonnage ſo captured, provided they proved their caſe, to the ſatisfaction of the Lords Commiſſioners of the Treaſury, and obtained a licence from them to that effect, before the 1ſt of Auguſt, 1806.

But though much has been done during the laſt ſeſſion of Parliament, in the great work of extinguiſhing the opprobrious traffic carried on in the perſons of our African brethren, it is hardly neceſſary to remind the friends of *that* meaſure that much yet remains to be effected;—

that

that nearly one half of this cruel commerce ſtill ſubſiſts and flouriſhes, under the national ſanction, and ſupported by powerful intereſts and inveterate prejudices. Inſtead therefore of relaxing thoſe exertions, which, through the favour of Providence, have effected ſo conſiderable a diminution of the Slave Trade, the enemies of that traffic are bound to redouble their efforts, both with a view of retaining the ground already gained, and of advancing to the happy termination of their labours.

The time, it is to be hoped, is not now far diſtant, when Africa will be relieved from the oppreſſion, degradation, and miſery of this impious commerce; when arreſting the progreſs of that ſyſtem of fraud, treachery, and violence, which converts a large part of the habitable globe into a field of warfare and deſolation, this nation ſhall begin to atone to the Negro race for their accumulated wrongs, by ardent endeavours to impart to them the advantages of civilization, the comforts and ſecurity of ſocial life, and the ineſtimable bleſſings of the Chriſtian religion.

It will be impoſſible to read the above ſtatement, or to look into the debates which follow, without the painful recollection that one of the chief promoters of theſe important meaſures of reſtriction, as well as one of the oldeſt and warmeſt friends and moſt powerful advocates of this cauſe of outraged juſtice and ſuffering humanity, is now no more. No one who feels for the wretched Africans can ceaſe to lament the event which has deprived them of the benefit of the ſplendid talents and ardent zeal of Mr. Fox. This ſtroke is rendered ſtill more ſevere by the ſubſequent loſs of another able and conſiſtent ſupporter of that righteous cauſe, * whoſe bold and vigorous eloquence it never failed to call forth.

* Dr. Horsley, Biſhop of St. Aſaph.

But

But though deprived of the perſonal aid of theſe eminent men; though that illuſtrious character,* on whoſe efforts in the proſecution of the ſame great object, Mr. Fox pronounced in the courſe of this debate (the laſt debate in which the declining ſtate of his health permitted him to engage), ſo merited an eulogium, be likewiſe taken from us; yet there is no reaſon to deſpair of ultimate ſucceſs. "Even if all thoſe who are now engaged in this queſtion," obſerved Mr. Fox on another occaſion with his characteriſtic ardour, "were to be removed, there would never be wanting men alive to their duty who would cry out for juſtice; who would maintain a perpetual ſtruggle till this trade ſhould be done away."

*Mr. Pitt.

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ERRATA.

P. 57, l. 9, *for* Mr. BARHAH *read* Mr. BARHAM.
58, l. 21, *for* Iflands *read* Iſland.

Direction to the Binder.

Slave Ship to be placed oppoſite page 192.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

10th JUNE, 1806.

MR. SECRETARY FOX,

MR. SPEAKER, before I ſubmit to the Houſe what I have to propoſe on the ſubject of the Slave Trade, I wiſh to ſay a few words by way of apology for my being the perſon to bring it forward. Sir, motions to the ſame effect have been repeatedly made in this Houſe, during the laſt ſixteen or ſeventeen years, by an Honourable Gentleman [Mr. WILBERFORCE] who has, on every occaſion, ſhewn himſelf to be a moſt reſpectable Member of Parliament, but who, on no occaſion, has commanded the admiration of the public ſo much as on thoſe in which his abilities have been diſplayed in recommending to this Houſe the Abolition of the Slave Trade. Finding ſuch a ſubject in ſuch hands, in ſuch hands would I moſt willingly have left it; for my own conviction is, that it would have been better that my Honourable Friend ſhould himſelf have made this motion. I am ſure he could not do it, nor could any other Member of this Houſe, without receiving every poſſible ſupport from me, and as I am perſuaded, from all thoſe who, upon every former occaſion, have given their opinions and their votes in favour of the Abolition of the Slave Trade. But he, and many others who entertain ſimilar views with him on this ſubject were ſtrongly, although I think unfoundedly, of opinion that, all circumſtances conſidered, it would be better that I ſhould commence this diſcuſſion. It is in deference to their judgment that I undertake the taſk, and I undertake it moſt willingly. The motion with which I ſhall have the honour of concluding, will tend, in its conſequence, to effectuate the total Abolition of the African Slave Trade; and, I do confeſs, that ſince I have ſat in this Houſe, a period of between thirty and forty years, if I had done nothing elſe, but had only been inſtrumental in carrying through this meaſure, I ſhould think my life well ſpent, and ſhould retire quite ſatisfied that I had not lived in vain.

Having ſaid thus much by way of apology for the motion originating with myſelf, I ſhall proceed immedi-

ately to the conſideration of the queſtion, reſpecting which I am about to ſubmit a Motion to the Houſe.

I ſhall commence with obſerving, what, indeed gives me pleaſure, that whatever difference may have ariſen, in the courſe of debates in this or the other Houſe of Parliament, as to the mode of aboliſhing the African Slave Trade, or the time when that object is to be effected; with reſpect to the Slave Trade itſelf, the opinion which either Houſe have almoſt unanimouſly entertained of it has been, "That it is contrary to juſtice, to humanity, and to "ſound policy." This was the ſentiment expreſſed by a Reſolution of this Houſe in 1792, and which will be found to have been the uniform opinion of this Houſe with ſomething very near unanimity. Sir, I will not conſume many minutes in arguing reſpecting the principle of the Slave Trade; in ſhewing the injuſtice, the inhumanity, the hateful cruelty, of carrying defenceleſs human beings from their native land, in order to ſell them, like an herd of cattle. "To deal and traffick in human fleſh and "blood,"—as was well expreſſed by an Honourable Gentleman (Mr. BURKE) whoſe ſplendid abilities mankind will long remember, whoſe good qualities were numerous and rare, and whoſe humanity was a leading part of his great character:—"To deal and traffick," as he ſaid, "not in the labour of men, but in men them-"ſelves, was to devour the root, inſtead of enjoying the "fruit of human diligence," and was therefore not only contrary to juſtice and humanity, but alſo to ſound policy.

But it is argued you do not make theſe negroes ſlaves; you find them ſo; or at leaſt you find them convicts for certain crimes.

Without entering into the nature of theſe crimes, or the means of criminating theſe unhappy beings, or the cruelty of ſuch a principle, the pretence of which is only adding hypocriſy to the luſt of gain; I will ſay, that even if it were true that all whom we purchaſe had committed crimes, for which, by their own laws, ſlavery may be impoſed as a puniſhment, I really think that it is not for the Britiſh nation to provide ſhipping to conduct the police of Africa. I really think that a trade founded on ſuch a *principle*, and tending to perpetuate ſuch miſery, is not a fit

trade

trade for us to profecute. In this plea we may perceive how the luſt of lucre, the ſordid object of gain, can blind men who, when other objects are before them, are pretty clear ſighted. But I will go no further into this ſubject:—it is unneceſſary, becauſe the ſentiment of Parliament has been fully expreſſed upon it already, with a very few exceptions—with the exception of ſome perſons in the other Houſe of Parliament, and of the two members for Liverpool in this; one of whom indeed (General GASCOYNE) has declared the Slave Trade to be a thing good in itſelf, ſo good, that if you had it not, you ought to create it by bounties. Now, with all the reſpect for him that he is entitled to, I cannot pay him ſuch a compliment as to ſuppoſe that he is right, againſt the nearly unanimous ſentiment of this Houſe, repeatedly declared in ſuch a manner as entitles me to ſay, that that part of the matter which reſpects the principle of this trade is ſettled. And as to authorities on this ſubject, none in this Houſe can be higher than thoſe which I ſhall quote, and they ſhall be ſuch as even my Honourable Friend oppoſite to me (General GASCOYNE) ſhall aſſent to. I will quote even the authority of thoſe who have conſtantly been adverſe to every motion for the Abolition of the Slave Trade. I know, and I am ſure I mention it with great concern, that a Noble Viſcount who was your (though not immediate) predeceſſor, Sir, in that Chair (Lord SIDMOUTH), was againſt the propoſition of my Honourable Friend (Mr. WILBERFORCE) for the immediate Abolition of the African Slave Trade. But although that nobleman certainly differed from my Honourable Friend as to the manner in which the abolition ſhould be effected, and the time at which it ſhould be accompliſhed, yet, with reſpect to the deteſtable character of the Trade itſelf, he agreed entirely with us; and upon that occaſion not one, no not even my Honourable Friend or any other member of this Houſe, ever expreſſed more ſtrongly, or with more feeling, a deteſtation of the Slave Trade than that noble Lord did on that occaſion. Another noble Viſcount, then alſo a member of this Houſe (Lord MELVILLE), who did a great deal to prevent the Abolition of the Slave Trade, not only delivered in this Houſe, but

alſo recorded on its journals, an opinion, the ſubſtance of which was, "That the Slave Trade, being contrary to "the principles of juſtice, humanity and ſound policy, "it was fit that it ſhould be aboliſhed:" and this Reſolution that Noble Lord followed up by proviſions for effecting a gradual Abolition. Now, "juſtice and hu-"manity, and ſound policy" are the words which I have uſed in the reſolution which I ſhall have the honour to ſubmit to the Houſe; and, having followed the words of a former Reſolution brought forward by a Member who differed from me upon this ſubject, which was alſo aſſented to by the Houſe, I think I have a right to expect the concurrence, as much of thoſe who are enemies to the *immediate* Abolition of the Slave Trade, as of the friends of that meaſure.

Now, having taken it for granted, that upon general principles, not above one or two Members of this Houſe can entertain any doubt of the propriety of aboliſhing the African Slave Trade, as early as we can do it; I ſhould hope there would be, on this occaſion, very little variety of opinion. In conſidering this matter, I wiſh the Houſe to have ſome regard for its own conſiſtency. Under that impreſſion it will do well to reflect how long ago this ſubject was brought forward. Upwards of fourteen years have elapſed ſince this Houſe declared its opinion to be, that *the African Slave Trade ought to be aboliſhed.* When I conſider this declaration, and what has been done, or rather what has not been done, in purſuance of it:—when I find that no one ſtep has been taken towards an Abolition, agreed to be fitting more than fourteen years ago; I cannot help thinking that the Houſe will find itſelf bound, from regard for its own character and reputation in this country, and in the reſt of the world, to do ſomething towards the Abolition of a Trade which the Houſe itſelf reſolved, moſt ſolemnly, ſhould be aboliſhed ten years ago, viz. on the 1ſt of January, 1796, and of which it has, ſo frequently, expreſſed its abhorrence. In the year 1791, indeed, the propoſition of my Honourable Friend (Mr. WILBERFORCE) was rejected; but in the year 1792, the buſineſs having been very much conſidered by the country at large, warm feelings were neceſſarily excited, and thoſe warm feelings

were,

were, as neceſſarily, communicated to this Houſe. Then, and in a very full attendance, the queſtion was agitated, and was carried, for a gradual Abolition, contrary to my deſire, becauſe I was always for an immediate Abolition. It is, however, a fact that in that ſeſſion (1792) it was reſolved by this Houſe that a period ſhould be put to the Slave Trade, on the 1ſt of January, 1796: and this after all the ample diſcuſſions which took place in that and ſeveral preceding ſeſſions. My Lord MELVILLE, who was then a Miniſter of State, and a perſon of conſiderable authority in this Houſe, was for delaying the total Abolition to the year 1800. This was the opinion of that ſtateſman who was the moſt anxious to delay the Abolition of this Trade; and who moſt forcibly ſtated all the reaſons he could collect for making the period for ſuch an Abolition, as diſtant as poſſible, and, certainly, more diſtant than any other perſon propoſed it to be: even he, with all his deſire to prolong the Trade as much as poſſible, propoſed that its total Abolition ſhould take place in the year 1800. We are now in the year 1806, and have taken no ſtep towards the completion of that work, which we undertook in the face of the world to accompliſh; and with our negligence to complete that work, the country, the whole civilized world, may well reproach this Houſe, for it is, indeed, to ſay the leaſt of it, a deplorable negligence of our duty.

It was my original intention, when I firſt determined on propoſing this buſineſs to the Houſe, to aſk leave to bring in a bill for aboliſhing the Slave Trade. But my Honourable Friend (Mr. WILBERFORCE) with all his wiſhes, and nobody has warmer wiſhes, for the total Abolition of this Trade, looking to all the circumſtances of the preſent ſeſſion, the time which ſuch a meaſure will naturally require in both Houſes of Parliament, the great portion of other public buſineſs remaining to be done, and the improbability of the meaſure being ready in the preſent ſeſſion to receive the Royal aſſent, thinks it inexpedient now to bring in a Bill for the direct and total Abolition of the Slave Trade; he being impreſſed with an idea that it is better not to commence ſuch a meaſure, without a fair proſpect of its being finally concluded in the

courſe

courſe of the ſame ſeſſion. And I freely own myſelf to be convinced, that although a bill ſhould paſs this Houſe, as I believe it would, for the total Abolition, yet that the Lords, let them be ever ſo ſincere, would undoubtedly have, I will not ſay pretences, but good reaſons to ſay, that, in the preſent ſtate of Parliamentary buſineſs, it would not be fit for them to paſs ſuch a Bill at this late period of the ſeſſion. What alternative then, was left? either to paſs this ſeſſion of Parliament over in ſilence, as to the general queſtion of the Slave Trade; to relinquiſh entirely the purſuit of that intereſting ſubject; or to propoſe the reſolution which I am about to ſubmit to the Houſe, and which goes, not to pledge the Houſe to any particular meaſure, to any particular time, to any particular courſe, but to ſhew that this Houſe is determined not to abandon, but on the contrary to follow up, the queſtion of the Abolition of the African Slave Trade. It is for this reaſon that the reſolution, as I ſhall move it, will leave two points entirely open. The firſt is *the manner* in which the object is to be accompliſhed. On this point I have heard it ſaid that it is not by Act of Parliament, or any thing that can be done in this country, that the Slave Trade can be aboliſhed; but that it muſt be done by ſome meaſure in the *Colonies*, firſt for the gradual diminution, and then for the final Abolition of that traffick. Now, Sir, although I have frequently heard hints thrown out to this effect, I have never yet heard any practicable plan propoſed. When I do, I will attend to it with great patience; but, having conſidered this ſubject, for eighteen years, pretty attentively, I am afraid, that with reſpect to myſelf for one, it will be impoſſible to convince me that we can do our duty, on the ſubject of the Slave Trade, in any way ſhort of its total Abolition by a direct prohibitory law. Thoſe, however, who think otherwiſe, will have an opportunity of ſtating their opinions. So much for the firſt point.

The other point is as to *the time* when the Abolition ſhould take place; whether that Abolition ſhould be on the paſſing of the act, or the year enſuing. No longer delay than that, could, I apprehend, be neceſſary, as it would be eight years beyond the longeſt period which

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was formerly propoſed even by Lord MELVILLE. To all thoſe, however, who wiſh ſtill to delay that Abolition, I would only ſay that, for the preſent, the whole of that matter is left entirely open. All I wiſh to do, is to repeat the declaration of this Houſe, "That the African Slave "Trade ſhall be aboliſhed;" ſtating at the ſame time as to myſelf, that I think it almoſt impoſſible that the period of the Abolition ſhould be too early, being of opinion, that any thing ſhort of immediate Abolition will fall ſhort of that which is due to juſtice and to policy, there being between theſe, in my opinion, no difference in public any more than in private affairs.

Now, Sir, as my motion goes no further, for the preſent, than to declare that you will, as ſpeedily as poſſible, take effectual means for aboliſhing a traffick which you have already declared to be contrary to juſtice, humanity and ſound policy, I apprehend that there can be no great variety of opinion among us, and I hope that this Reſolution will paſs with ſomething like unanimity.

But before I ſit down, I would ſay a few words, and but a few, on points connected with the preſent queſtion. And, firſt, I would warn all the Members of this Houſe, not to liſten to that flattery with which one of the Honourable Members for Liverpool is likely to aſſure the Houſe, as he and the town of Liverpool have done on more occaſions than one, that we have already aboliſhed the Slave Trade;—that what we have done already, under the name of regulation, muſt put an end to it. At the time when ſome regulations were firſt propoſed to take place in the carrying on of that Trade, they told us it would be better, as well as more candid, to aboliſh the Trade at once, than adopt regulations which would have the effect of deſtroying it; and this they have ſaid of every ſubſequent meaſure which has been propoſed with a view to regulation. In ſhort they have oppoſed in the moſt bitter manner every thing that has been offered even in the way of regulation, witneſs their oppoſition to Sir WILLIAM DOLBEN's bill for mitigating the horrors of the middle paſſage. That Bill, excellent though it was, theſe friends of the Slave Trade, oppoſed moſt vehemently, alleging that it would be the inevitable ruin of the Slave Trade;

although

although we find, by experience, that it has had no ſuch effect. And to paſs by other inſtances, when it was propoſed in this very ſeſſion to aboliſh the Foreign Slave Trade, and when ſome gentlemen connected with the Weſt Indies gave us their ſupport, the people of Liverpool ſaid this was the worſt meaſure that could be propoſed. They told us—"What! Aboliſh this part of the Trade! "Aboliſh the whole of it, at once! This is actual deſtruc- "tion! Deal fairly with us, and tell us that you are bent "upon deſtroying the whole of the Trade, that we "may underſtand you!" Theſe Gentlemen will now tell us—"Do not think of doing any thing more—the Trade "is actually aboliſhed,"—To this I ſay, "Gentlemen, "ſince you know the thing is done, ſince you are aware "that the deed is executed, give me leave to aſk you juſt "to ſet your name to it." That would not be too much for one Member of this Houſe to aſk of another in any ordinary tranſaction. But I am afraid that though the Abolition of the Foreign Slave Trade has done a great deal, having aboliſhed more than one half of the whole; yet it has left a germ from which the whole of the evil may ariſe again, and become more huge and hideous than ever. I truſt therefore that the Houſe will not believe that there is no neceſſity for the Abolition by Act of Parliament.

Now, with regard to what is ſtated of the ruin of the Weſt Indies by the Abolition of the African Trade, it is a ſubject to which great attention is due; but I am ſure I cannot refute that aſſertion more effectually than by referring to a ſplendid ſpeech which was delivered in this Houſe, by a Right Honourable Gentleman (Mr. PITT) no longer among us:—a ſpeech which, although not ſucceſsful in gaining the votes of a majority of this Houſe, was nevertheleſs the moſt powerful and convincing eloquence that ever adorned theſe walls:—a ſpeech not of vague and ſhewy ornament, but of ſolid and irreſiſtible argument, founded on a detail of indiſputable facts, and unqueſtionable calculations:—a ſpeech the very recital of which would now conclude that ſubject, of, which however, it is impoſſible to give to thoſe who had not the *good fortune* to be preſent on that memorable occaſion,

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any thing but a faint idea:—a ſpeech of which I would ſay, with the Roman author reciting the words of the Athenian orator

Quid effet ſi ipſum audiviſſetis!

That, Sir, was a ſpeech which was indeed remarkable, as many others were from the ſame perſon, for ſplendid eloquence, but as remarkable for ſolid ſenſe and convincing reaſon, ſupported by calculations founded on facts, and concluſions drawn from premiſes, as correctly as if they had been mathematical propoſitions, all tending to prove, that inſtead of the Weſt India plantations ſuffering an injury, they would derive a material benefit, by the Abolition of the African Slave Trade. That Right Honourable Gentleman, with reſpect to the Iſland of Jamaica, compleatly proved, that the ſtock of negroes might be kept up without any freſh importation from the Coaſt of Africa; and you have, in addition to that, the certainty of an increaſe in the population of the ſlaves from their being placed in an ameliorated condition, which would be the natural effect of the Abolition of the African Trade, but which its continuance will always materially contribute to retard, and, in many caſes, entirely prevent. I ſhould have thought that what has taken place in North America would have ſatisfied thoſe who are moſt prone to doubt that, by good treatment, the negro population may be kept up without importation. Within theſe nineteen or twenty years, the black population of America has been nearly doubled. Sir, when I hear theſe calculations made, when I find them authenticated by facts, when I find the conſequences of them ſo admirably illuſtrated by argument, as I have done, I am driven to the concluſion that, with the ſame treatment, the negro population would increaſe every where in the plantations, as it has done in ſome of them; and this is a proof, I muſt not ſay a *damning* but a bleſſed proof, of the truth of the propoſition, that there is no neceſſity for freſh importation to keep up the negro population in our Weſt India plantations; but that if you treat them as well as they may be treated, they will increaſe every year; ſo that you would ſoon have, on the Iſlands, as many ſlaves as you would want. And the effect of this increaſing population would be, a gradual, kind, prudent

and well guarded emancipation of ſuch individuals as may be fit for emancipation. By this courſe you would put the Iſlands on the beſt footing on which they can be placed, and which, although not now, nor ſoon, yet might ultimately place the ſlaves generally on a footing of freedom. I ſhall only add that I hope and truſt that the memory of that moſt eloquent perſon, (Mr. PITT) whoſe authority upon this ſubject, I have ſo often quoted, and take ſuch delight in quoting, will not be forgotten; and that the Gentlemen who voted with him, ſome from friendſhip, but many more from general conviction, and an impreſſion of the ſenſe of their public duty, will feel that they have an opportunity of ſhewing zeal for his memory, and of ſhewing it on a queſtion in which party feelings, ariſing out of political connections, can have no ſhare. I ſhall now conclude with moving—"That this Houſe, conſidering the African Slave Trade to be contrary to the principles of juſtice, humanity, and ſound policy, will, with all practicable expedition take effectual meaſures for the Abolition of the ſaid Trade, in ſuch manner, and at ſuch period, as may be deemed adviſeable."

Sir RALPH MILBANK ſeconded the Motion.

General TARLETON—I confeſs I riſe under conſiderable diſadvantage after the eloquent ſpeech which has juſt been delivered. It is my duty however to trouble the Houſe with a few obſervations on this momentous ſubject.

And firſt, as to the time when that ſubject was firſt brought forward. It was a time of profound peace; when taxes did not preſs upon all ranks of people as they do now, when we can but ill afford to adopt any meaſure that will occaſion a diminution in the revenue.

Sir, having loſt the queſtion of the Abolition of this trade in a variety of periods during the laſt ſeventeen or eighteen years, that the advocates of that meaſure ſhould come forward now, at a time ſo critical, is to me moſt extraordinary.

In the ſpeech of the Right Honourable Gentleman, I think I ſee an abatement of the vehemence with which this ſubject has uſually been diſcuſſed. He does not ſeem to

to be poſſeſſed of his former notions of the monſtrous inhumanity of the trade: on that topic he has ſaid little. But theſe are not his only omiſſions: for not a word have we heard of the alteration in the circumſtances of the times; not a word of the alteration which has taken place in our trade; not a word of the injuſtice which will be done to Liverpool, whenever the meaſure now propoſed, ſhall be adopted; nor of the inconvenience to be ſuffered by any other part of the kingdom. And therefore I am led to think that we have not the genuine reaſons laid before us for bringing forward this meaſure, but that it is bottomed on ſomething which is not ſtated to this Houſe, on a wiſh, perhaps, to gratify, for political purpoſes, the inclinations of an Honourable Member (Mr. WILBERFORCE) who is ſo extremely zealous on this ſubject.

The Right Honourable Gentleman has ſaid with ſome pleaſantry, that the gentlemen of Liverpool, conſidered every regulation of this trade as deſtructive of it. Now, the gentlemen of Liverpool have too much ſenſe to think ſo: but I have no difficulty in ſaying that the proſperity of Liverpool is intimately connected with the African Slave Trade. The Right Honourable Gentleman ſays, that I never approved of any meaſure which had for its object the regulation of the Slave Trade. Sir, it is difficult for me to aſſent to any meaſure which appears to be injurious to the intereſts of my conſtituents, cloſely connected as they are with the general intereſts of this country.

As to the ſituation of Liverpool, I have this to ſay, it was once a mere fiſhing hamlet, but it has riſen into proſperity in exact proportion to the extent of the African Slave Trade, ſo as to become the ſecond place in wealth and population in the Britiſh empire, renowned for its loyalty, as well as for its commercial enterprize. Its exports, independent of the African Slave Trade, are ſuperior to any other port except that of London, in the King's dominions, and the ſum which it contributes to the public purſe, is near three millions annually. But Liverpool has ſuffered much by the acceſſion of the Right Honourable Gentleman (Mr. Fox) to office. I ſay that

Liverpool has ſuffered, and will ſuffer conſiderably, in conſequence of the reſtrictions which have been put upon the African Trade. Your ſhipping will thereby be much impaired; and great inconveniences have been and will ſtill be felt, from the diſputes which the diſcuſſions upon this ſubject in Parliament have produced, between the merchants and the planters.

Sir, I will put it to the Houſe to conſider, that this war is likely to continue: if ſo, we muſt prepare for an increaſe of taxation, and this meaſure is one which will cut up, by the roots, the ſources of our wealth; ſo that one of theſe two evils muſt be the conſequence, either we muſt conſent to an ignoble peace, or we muſt tax the landed intereſt, to carry on the war, a point ſo clear, that I wonder the landed intereſt do not appear moſt decidedly againſt ſuch a meaſure as this. Nor is this all; thoſe who are to ſuffer by the Abolition of the Slave Trade, will come to Parliament for compenſation for their loſſes. There will be no pretence for refuſing ſuch a compenſation, becauſe, whatever may be ſaid about the injuſtice or the inhumanity of this trade, it is not to be denied that it is a trade which has been carried on under the auſpices of this Houſe, and agreeably to law; and therefore if this trade is now to be aboliſhed, all thoſe who have carried it on muſt have their loſſes made up, particularly thoſe who have been concerned in building ſhips for the trade, which, from their peculiar conſtruction, are unfit for any other; and this compenſation, I can aſſure his Majeſty's Miniſters, will be very conſiderable in its amount. I have no doubt that much evil will reſult to this country at large, from the Abolition of the Slave Trade, ſhould that meaſure be adopted; but with regard to Liverpool, I am confident that great diſtreſs, public and private, will be the reſult; that bankruptcies will follow; and that a number of our moſt loyal, induſtrious, and uſeful ſubjects will emigrate to America.

Now, Sir, as this increaſe is to produce ſo many evils, and to affect ſo valuable a reſource to the revenue of this country, as the trade of Liverpool, I can only ſay that, whatever I may do on the preſent occaſion, on ſome ſtage

of

of this buſineſs, I ſhall certainly take the ſenſe of the Houſe.

Mr. FRANCIS.—The Honourable General's conſtituents are certainly at liberty to come to this Houſe for compenſation when, or how they pleaſe, but it does not, by any means, follow, that, becauſe they ſhall come for compenſation, this Houſe is to grant it to them, for I have no difficulty in ſaying now, before they come, that I ſhall be very unwilling to grant it to them, either out of my own pocket, or out of the public purſe. Nor do I very well underſtand the propriety of a claim to be founded on the loſs of a trade which has long ſince been declared by this Houſe, and by the country at large, to be contrary to juſtice and humanity. I will liſten to their petition, to be ſure, and hear what ſhall be ſaid in ſupport of it, but I ſhall certainly liſten with great ſuſpicion and diſtruſt, becauſe I know that on every regulation which was offered to be made in the African Slave Trade, theſe ſame gentlemen of Liverpool exclaimed againſt the meaſure, and ſaid it would be abſolute deſtruction to their Trade; and ſome of theſe very regulations theſe gentlemen themſelves have ſince acknowledged to be beneficial.

Sir, my opinion on the Slave Trade; on its injuſtice; on its inhumanity; on the neceſſity of aboliſhing it; have been ſo often declared in this Houſe, that it is needleſs for me to ſay much now upon that ſubject. I have at all times taken a direct part in favour of every meaſure that was intended to bring about the Abolition. I will always give my ſupport to every meaſure for that Abolition, while I have the honour of a ſeat in this Houſe, let that meaſure come from whatever quarter it may.

Sir, this explanation of my conduct will, I hope, procure me credit, if I ſtate a doubt as to the propriety of the preſent mode of proceeding, for I think that we ought to come now, in the courſe of this debate, to the conſideration of ſomething more *deciſive* than is propoſed in this Reſolution. We have had too much experience of the inefficiency of reſolutions on this ſubject. After what has happened in this buſineſs, after a ſolemn Reſolution of this Houſe in 1792, has been wholly diſregarded, no

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man can reaſonably call on me to truſt to any further Reſolution of this Houſe for aboliſhing the African Slave Trade. Beſides, if it is too late in the ſeſſion to carry the Bill for the Abolition of the Slave Trade, it is too late alſo to carry this Reſolution; for the latter requires juſt as much debate as the former. I would therefore ſay, try your Bill at once. If the diſpoſition of the Houſe of Commons is what I hope it is—if the diſpoſition of the Houſe of Lords is what I hope it is, then I ſay, that the golden opportunity offers, ſeize it, and bring in your Bill at once. If you do not ſucceed now, I do not know when you will. It is on theſe grounds, and not at all from any wiſh that I have to oppoſe this meaſure, that I have delivered theſe ſentiments, for my deſire is, that a Bill may be brought in at once for the total Abolition of the African Slave Trade.

Lord CASTLEREAGH.—I do not riſe to detain the Houſe for any conſiderable length of time on the merits of this great and moſt intereſting queſtion; but I do not concur with thoſe who hold this motion to be well timed. I think it would be more conſiſtent with the principles of thoſe who bring this meaſure forward, to introduce ſome ſpecific propoſition; but I think that with reference both to this, and the other Houſe of Parliament, the time of the ſeſſion which Gentlemen admit to be improper for a ſpecific meaſure, is unfit alſo for the Reſolution propoſed to us. I own that in applying to the Reſolution itſelf, I feel that I am placed in a ſituation of conſiderable embarraſſment. On the common feelings of humanity, indeed, there can be no difficulty in forming an opinion. If that were all that was to be conſidered, a Reſolution for the immediate Abolition of the African Slave Trade might eaſily be voted. But I apprehend that we are ſo far from making any progreſs towards that end, by ſuch a Reſolution, that we may, poſſibly, retard it; and I think we ought to conſider whether it is not an unfortunate predicament for this Houſe to place itſelf in, to hold out to the world promiſes without fulfilling them.

As to the general principle on which this Reſolution is *founded*, I agree to it, and I do not know who can entertain

tain a contrary opinion in this Houſe. *I think it a propoſition on which no human being can entertain a doubt*, namely, "that THE SLAVE TRADE IS A GREAT EVIL IN ITSELF;" and I think that *as little doubt can be entertained upon another propoſition;* namely, THAT IT IS THE DUTY AND THE POLICY OF PARLIAMENT TO ABROGATE THAT EVIL AND TO EXTIRPATE IT, IF THAT BE PRACTICABLE, IT BEING A STAIN UPON THE NATIONAL CHARACTER. But the queſtion is, whether in point of fact you can do ſo. Conceiving, therefore, that nothing can be worſe imagined than the policy of this Reſolution, I am extremely anxious not to be underſtood to give it my unqualified, and therefore I do not give an unexplained, concurrence. At the ſame time I think it would be perfectly fruitleſs to argue the matter now—I ſhall reſerve myſelf until the Right Honourable Gentleman ſhall have brought in ſome diſtinct propoſition for the Abolition of the Slave Trade.

But, Sir, before I proceed further upon this ſubject, I ſhould take notice of the ſituation in which we, at preſent, ſtand—I had not the honour of a ſeat in this Houſe when this ſubject was diſcuſſed in it, but it ſtruck my mind, that when a Houſe of Parliament expreſſed the preciſe period at which the Abolition of the African Slave Trade was to take place, and when that period arrived, and the Houſe failed to redeem its pledge with the public, it carried with it an idea, either that Parliament did not really wiſh to accompliſh that object, or that there was ſomething impracticable in the thing itſelf, and that the view which was taken then, of the policy of the meaſure, was ſuch as experience has ſhewn it to be, a ſuperficial one. I have no heſitation in ſaying, that had I been in Parliament when this ſubject was firſt diſcuſſed, ſuch is the natural repugnance I ſhould feel to this traffick, that the impulſe of it would have carried me into a general concurrence in its unqualified Abolition. But, ſtill, I hope the Right Honourable Gentleman will be prepared to admit, that if his own exertions, and thoſe of other eloquent Members of this Houſe, and particularly of my lately departed and ever to be eſteemed Right Honourable Friend (Mr. PITT), failed of ſucceſs; the genuine ſenſe of Parliament was decidedly againſt them.

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It would be conſuming the time of the Houſe unneceſſarily to go at preſent into the detail of the ground on which my ſentiments on this ſubject are founded. I probably ſhall feel, in a future ſeſſion, when the queſtion comes forward in a practicable ſhape, the neceſſity of ſtating fully my ſentiments. But I have no difficulty in declaring now, that my feelings on this queſtion, are founded on as rooted an abhorrence of this traffick, as thoſe of any other Gentleman in this Houſe, and I regret the continuance of the African Slave Trade, as much as any Gentleman who would go the greateſt lengths for its Abolition. No individual would go further than I would do to ſeparate this Trade from the Weſt India Trade, being as I feel it to be, againſt all the principles of juſtice and humanity. It has exiſted, however, for a long period, and will, I am afraid, exiſt for a long period to come; and what I muſt lament, is that the courſe which the Right Honourable Gentleman is purſuing on this ſubject, moſt honeſtly and humanely I have no doubt in its intention, has been ſo unfortunate in its effect, as to be ſo far from diminiſhing that it has increaſed the evil in queſtion. So that ſo far from ſerving the cauſe of humanity, have been the efforts of thoſe who have attempted to aboliſh the Slave Trade, that calamities have ariſen out of thoſe very efforts, and more will be felt, ſo long as the matter remains undecided.

I underſtand that in the event of this Reſolution being agreed to, my Honourable Friend (Mr. WILBERFORCE) is to move an Addreſs to His Majeſty that he may be graciouſly pleaſed to ſignify his readineſs to co-operate with Foreign Powers in their endeavours to aboliſh the Slave Trade. Now, I ſay, ſuppoſing all this accompliſhed, and that all the powers of the world were to ſignify to this country their general abhorrence of this trade; what ſecurity would that give you for its diſcontinuance? I would aſk the Right Honourable Gentleman who brings this reſolution forward, whether if he were to adviſe His Majeſty to make this declaration of his readineſs to co-operate with other powers in this Abolition,—to France, to Spain, or Portugal,—it would have any effect? I would aſk the Right Honourable Gentleman, whether he knows

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what is the opinion of the individual who is at the head of the French government, and what is the fixed policy of the Spaniſh government, on this ſubject? Their intention is to carry on this trade, and it will be conducted by others under their flags, ſo that the trade will be carried on in a more inhuman manner hereafter than it is at preſent. The Right Honourable Gentleman can hardly be ignorant of the intentions of France and Spain, and he muſt know what the intentions of Portugal are upon this ſubject, and, therefore that my honourable friend (Mr. WILBERFORCE) ſhould hope to ſucceed in his object, by addreſſing His Majeſty to declare his readineſs to co-operate with foreign powers, to aboliſh the Slave Trade, merely becauſe Denmark has made ſome attempt of that kind, is very extraordinary. But I will go further, and ſay that if the Right Honourable Gentleman were to ſucceed in perſuading the French Government, and the Spaniſh Government, as well as Denmark, to *promiſe* to put an end to the Slave Trade, yet my opinion is, that even then there would be no ſecurity for its Abolition. My opinion decidedly is, that if all the governments in the world were determined to put down this Traffick, it would not therefore be put down. You cannot do it by all the governments in the world. For although you may prevent the inhabitants of a *parent ſtate* from being concerned in it, yet that parent ſtate cannot prevent its *Colonies* from carrying on that traffick; for if the parent ſtate were to prohibit the colonies from carrying it on, it would be carried on by frauds which the parent ſtate would have no means of preventing. And therefore I do ſay that the general conſent of all the parent ſtates of Europe, ſuppoſing you could obtain it, would effect nothing without the cordial co-operation of the Colonies. Then, if in that view of the matter the thing is impracticable in itſelf as a general ſyſtem, I am perſuaded that our taking it up in the way which ſeems to be in view, will be ſo far from ſerving the cauſe of humanity, that it will increaſe the evil and expoſe us to the riſk of loſing a ſource of Traffick which is eſſential to our naval ſtrength, without any advantage, of any kind whatever, to counterbalance the loſs. I ſhould therefore

wiſh that our national intereſt was conſidered in a more enlarged point of view. I am not only convinced that this meaſure would throw the Trade into other hands, but by occaſioning a deficiency in the ſupply of our own Colonies, would drive them to adopt means of obtaining ſupplies againſt the law. Our Colonies will be as well ſupplied as they now are, and that by a contraband trade, after all your regulations ſhall have been paſt.

Now, it may be aſked, "Is this country for ever to "remain ſatisfied, to admit of an evil of this great extent; "and make no effort to get rid of it?" I certainly think that if the enemies of the Slave Trade had bent their minds to a more practical and buſineſs-like view of this queſtion; if they had not conſidered themſelves pledged to their firſt opinion, and had deſiſted from endeavouring to do more than was practicable, they, long ere this, might have made ſome progreſs in their object; but by endeavouring to puſh matters to extremes they have miſſed their aim. I ſhould, therefore, wiſh that no propoſition ſhould be ſubmitted to this Houſe, ſignifying that we are to go to the immediate Abolition of the African Slave Trade. In the preſent condition of things I ſhould think that moſt unwiſe, becauſe it would be committing Parliament to do that which Parliament cannot do. Therefore you are only ſhewing your own incompetency, and expoſing the character of this Houſe when you are voting theſe general Reſolutions. The preſent Motion indeed is ſo worded that I do not ſee how it can, with propriety, be rejected; but when carried, it may pledge this Houſe to ſomething which it may not be able to perform. The queſtion before us is one the whole of the policy of which is not ſeen at the firſt view of it, and the purſuit of which may be attended by conſequences the moſt lamentable: I mean it will have the effect of increaſing the evil which it is the object of theſe Gentlemen to put an end to. The period of making Motions of this nature has been conſidered by the Planters, as the ſeaſon of their harveſt; and Liverpool never did any thing like the buſineſs in the ſame period of time, in the African Slave Trade, as it did in the interim between the time of *paſſing the* Reſolution of this Houſe for the Abolition of

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that Trade, and the period at which it was to have been abolished. Therefore, I say, that nothing is so bad as stating a time at which the traffick shall cease by law. My conviction is, that you have proceeded on a wrong principle. If you had meant to combat this evil effectually, you would have followed the policy of your system of reform at home, not by direct prohibition, but by other means which will ultimately have the effect of a prohibition. If you find that you cannot remove evils at home by prohibition, how much less can you accomplish such an object by such means, in the Islands and Plantations, where you will want the aid of the civil authority to counteract the natural interest of the Islands. Therefore, I apprehend, if you had looked to what the course of nature would have done for you, you would not have adopted the principle of prohibition, for that is an impolitic mode of accomplishing your end; but you would have adopted a system of duty on fresh importations, to be carried on progressively, as far as it could be made effectual without encouraging a contraband or smuggling trade. You ought to take it moderately at first, and raise it gradually, until it should come, at last, to the highest, so as to operate as a prohibition, and in the interim, by the gradation of your advancement, you would have held out no encouragement to any contraband traffick. The duty thus raised, I think, should go back again, into the pocket of the Planter, as a premium to him, upon a given increase on the negro population of his estate. This would be to him the best inducement for the good usage of the negroes, which would then produce a direct and immediate advantage, as indeed it would be always the ultimate benefit of the plantations. This is the system by which you might have accomplished the Abolition of the African Slave Trade; for, by this system, the Planters, instead of opposing, would have gone along with you, so that the African Slave Trade would have been discontinued. Nor do I believe you can accomplish your object completely, by any other mode. No act of Parliament, past in this country, can have an effectual operation in a remote part of our dominion, against the natural interest of those who are to carry it into execution. I do, there-

fore, put it to the underſtanding, as well as to the feeling of the Houſe, that we have no alternative but to adopt this ſyſtem; for I am convinced we ſhall never make any effectual progreſs in the diminution of this evil, but by ſome meaſure which ſhall carry the intereſts and the feelings of the Colonies along with us; and that we ſhall never, as a nation, do any good in controuling them, unleſs we can ſhew the policy of our act to be conſiſtent with their immediate intereſt. If we were to prohibit the importation into our Colonies, it would operate only on our own ſhipping, for the importation would be immediately carried on by France. It is well worth the while of the Right Honourable Gentleman (Mr. Fox) to conſider by what means beſides that of reaſoning he can counteract the efforts of a mighty nation in the hands of an ambitious Chief. If you can counteract that ambition, by making it the intereſt of the Colonies no longer to encourage the importation, by putting them in a ſtate not to want it, your object will be accompliſhed; otherwiſe you will only make France, inſtead of yourſelves, a drain upon Africa. Therefore, I am perſuaded, if the Right Honourable Gentleman means to make any uſeful progreſs in this great work of humanity, he muſt look towards ſome propoſition of the nature I have ſtated; and in that caſe, I am convinced there is no body of people in this world who will be more ready to go along with him, than the Merchants concerned in this Trade; who I think have been dealt with, by the Right Honourable Gentleman, in a manner which they are perfectly juſtified in reſiſting.

If, however, he would point his views in a ſhape conſiſtent with their intereſt, ſuch as would lead alſo to the general intereſts of humanity, I am ſure that no man can entertain a doubt that he will have the cordial co-operation of the Weſt India Planters. If this ſyſtem had been adopted when the Abolition was firſt propoſed, conſidering the character of the perſons who would have been concerned in it, great progreſs would have been made towards the reduction of the evil.

Sir, I may have ſaid more than I intended at firſt, but I ſhould wiſh to ſee ſome fair, intelligible, practical mode laid before the Houſe. I think, however, that the preſent meaſure

meaſure is unwiſe, as it holds out a ſort of promiſe for the Abolition of the Slave Trade, and yet it does not comprehend the real ſcope of opinion of the different Members of this Houſe; for many may vote for this reſolution, who may not be able to agree to any propoſition which Miniſters may propoſe to ingraft upon it. I therefore wiſh that this Reſolution might not be perſiſted in; but not feeling inclined to take the ſenſe of the Houſe on the point, at preſent, I wiſh to be underſtood to reſerve my opinion, which I ſhall give at large when any intelligible propoſition is brought forward on the ſubject.

The Solicitor General (Sir SAMUEL ROMILLY)—I certainly ſhould have more cordially ſupported a motion for leave to bring in a Bill for the total and immediate Abolition of the African Slave Trade, than I do the preſent motion. Yet although the motion does not go ſo far as I could have wiſhed it to have gone, ſtill I truſt the Houſe will think it ought to be adopted. If the Honourable Gentleman who ſpoke laſt but one (Mr. FRANCIS) thinks it more expedient to proceed to the Abolition of the Slave Trade immediately, there is nothing to hinder him from taking any meaſure which he may think deſirable for that purpoſe, notwithſtanding the adoption of the motion now before the Houſe.

The Noble Lord who ſpoke laſt, ſays that the Reſolution is ſo vague and indefinite, as to be unintelligible. Now, Sir, I do not ſee that there is any ambiguity in the Reſolution, for it only ſtates, "That the Houſe conſider-"ing the African Slave Trade, to be contrary to the prin-"ciples of juſtice, humanity, and ſound policy, will, "with all practicable expedition, take effectual meaſures "for the Abolition of the ſaid trade, in ſuch manner, and "at ſuch period, as may be deemed adviſeable."

My reaſon for troubling the Houſe on this occaſion is, not to go into the queſtion of the Abolition of the Slave Trade, a queſtion which it is almoſt too late to argue; for it does appear to me, that there is now nothing new to be diſcuſſed. I know of nothing in ſupport of the continuance of the Slave Trade, but aſſertions already diſproved, and arguments already refuted, and

therefore there remains nothing to be argued. It does not thence follow that nothing remains to be done. On the contrary, I, as an individual of this country, do feel moſt ſeriouſly the reproachful ſituation in which we ſtand at this moment, with reſpect to the Slave-Trade. The year 1796 was the utmoſt limit allowed for the exiſtence of that moſt abominable and diſgraceful traffick, and yet it ſtill ſubſiſts.—It is not however ſtating the caſe fairly to ſay, that this Houſe has made a pledge, and that it has not done any thing to redeem that pledge; for this Houſe, in the ſeſſion before the laſt, paſſed a Bill for the Abolition of the African Slave Trade; and it was only becauſe another Houſe of Parliament did not agree to it, that the Bill was loſt. In a very thin Houſe, and on a very unexpected diviſion in the laſt ſeſſion, the meaſure was loſt; and the ſituation in which this country ſtands in conſequence of it, appears to me the moſt reproachful and the moſt diſgraceful in which it can poſſibly be placed. I can very well underſtand, that nations as well as individuals, may be guilty of the moſt immoral acts, from their not having the courage to inquire into their nature and conſequences. Before the year 1789, this country had not the courage to inquire into all the circumſtances of this trade. But in that year this Houſe had the courage to appoint a Committee to inveſtigate the complaints which were preferred againſt it. The Committee ſat, and after a painful and anxious inveſtigation, they reported to this Houſe a great body of evidence, by which it is eſtabliſhed beyond the poſſibility of diſpute, that the African Slave Trade is carried on by rapine, robbery, and murder; by encouraging and by fomening wars; by falſe accuſations and imaginary crimes. Thus are theſe unhappy beings, in order to ſupply this Traffick in human blood, torn from their families, relatives, and homes, not only in war, but profound peace, and after being ſold in their native land, they are carried acroſs the Atlantic, in the moſt deplorable ſtate in which it is poſſible to convey them alive, and under circumſtances of too much horror to bear reflection.

Now, Sir, after all this has been proved; after it has *been* aſcertained by indiſputable evidence, that this trade

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cannot be carried on without the moſt iniquitous practices; that rapine, robbery, and murder are the foundations of it; that men are falſely accuſed, and on falſe accuſations condemned, in order to ſupply its victims; that wars are fomented to ſupport this Traffick; that moſt diſguſting cruelties attend it, in the paſſage of this unhappy part of our ſpecies from their native home to the place of their ſlavery; that they are there ſubjected to a cruel and perpetual bondage;—I do ſay that this Trade, ought not to be ſuffered to continue for an hour; it is a ſtain upon our national reputation, and ought to be wiped away. The inhumanity of the Traffick is moſt enormous, and ſuch as we cannot look at without ſhuddering. Since the period at which we reſolved to aboliſh this Trade, viz. 1796, no leſs than 360 thouſand individuals have been torn by us from the coaſt of Africa to ſupply this Trade! Such is the accumulation of guilt that hangs on the Engliſh nation at this moment! I cannot, therefore, ſuffer this ſubject to paſs, without expreſſing my moſt anxious wiſh to concur in the immediate Abolition of a Traffick, that has brought upon this nation ſuch idelible diſgrace. And I do not object to the preſent motion, becauſe it is perfectly conſiſtent with that wiſh.

But it is ſaid, that if the Abolition of the Slave Trade is to take place, it will be neceſſary to make compenſation to thoſe who now carry it on, for the loſs which they will ſuſtain by its diſcontinuance; and that this compenſation muſt be a large one. That is a ſubject for a ſubſequent conſideration. I will grant, however, for the ſake of the argument, and for the ſake of the argument only, that this compenſation may be neceſſary; but then I would aſk thoſe who maintain that neceſſity, whether (if this be indeed a debt due from the people of England to a few individuals) the debts of the people of England are to be paid with the blood of the people of Africa? I do not know whether we are bound to make any compenſation in this caſe; but if we are, the blood of our fellow-creatures is not the medium through which that compenſation ought to flow. The people of England are not to conſent that there ſhould be carried on, in their name, a ſyſtem of

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blood, rapine, robbery and murder; and that, merely becauſe we muſt make compenſation to ſome individuals.

I do not ſee any reaſon to enter into the queſtion generally, except to obſerve on one point which has been ſtated by the noble Lord who ſpoke laſt. He ſeems to think that there is no mode of aboliſhing this Trade but with the concurrence of the Colonies;—that we muſt obtain their conſent to the meaſure;—that it muſt be left to their feelings. If ſo, I am afraid we ſhall never aboliſh it. If we refer to the correſpondence of the Weſt India Governors, we ſhall find that nothing of this kind is be expected, and that whenever we have expreſſed a deſire to aboliſh the Slave Trade, the aim of the Colonies has been to diſappoint us in the attainment of that object. And I would take the liberty of aſking the noble Lord, whether he thinks this country ought to endure the diſgrace and the guilt of continuing this hateful Traffick, until the period at which the Colonies ſhall conſent to its Abolition.

As to the objection which the Noble Lord has ſtarted, of this Reſolution being too vague and indefinite, I can only ſay that it appears plain to me; and that the ſubſtitute for an immediate Abolition which he recommends to the Houſe, viz. an Abolition by way of duty, and alſo that we ſhould conſult the will of the Planters, is indeed extremely vague and indefinite; for it is impoſſible for any human being to meaſure the ſpace between the preſent time and the Abolition of the Slave Trade, if that meaſure is to depend on the concurrence and approbation of the Colonies.

I ſhall not detain the Houſe any longer. I have ſtated my reaſons for wiſhing for the Abolition of the Slave Trade. I have aſſigned reaſons why I could wiſh that not a moment of unneceſſary delay ſhould take place in the accompliſhment of that good end, in getting rid of that ſtain on our national character. I am of opinion that this Reſolution is conſiſtent with that object, and therefore it has my entire concurrence.

General GASCOINE—I was moſt ſolicitous to catch your eye Sir, at an early period of this debate, but I have now the ſatisfaction to reflect that many of the arguments which

which have been brought forward in ſupport of this Motion, have been ſo ably anſwered, and many of thoſe points which I had to offer ſo ably anticipated, by a Noble Lord (Lord CASTLEREAGH) who has ſpoken lately in this debate, that it will not be neceſſary for me to go ſo fully into the queſtion as I meant to do. And I muſt ſay, that in what has fallen from the Right Honourable Gentleman who brought forward this Motion, and to whom we all look up for every thing which talents can accompliſh, nothing which can be ſaid to be new has been offered upon this ſubject: nothing has been ſaid in addition to the arguments formerly offered, and which have been already anſwered by the votes of this Houſe. There can therefore exiſt no reaſon for altering our opinion with reſpect to meaſures like the preſent. This however I know, that all thoſe whoſe property is to be affected by them, have a right to complain, and that they will complain, and that we ſhall be under the neceſſity of urging arguments in their behalf, which the Right Honourable Gentleman will ſay are unfounded, but which, I ſay, are founded in juſtice, becauſe they ought to be indemnified for the loſſes which they ſhall ſuſtain. But what I would wiſh chiefly to impreſs on this Houſe, is that the repeated diſcuſſions of the ſubject in this Houſe, and in other places, particularly in the Weſt Indies, are extremely dangerous, in as much as they leſſen the ſecurity of property; an effect which is deſtructive to the Colonies, as well as to the merchants in this country who are concerned in the Weſt India Trade. Unleſs therefore you aboliſh the Trade at once, which I ſay you cannot do, the leſs you ſay about it the better.

But on the ſubject of humanity; admitting the principle of the Advocates for the Abolition to be juſt, I ſay the object of humanity will not be attained by Abolition, for it will only increaſe the demand from other Powers if we diſcontinue it. And therefore if the Trade be inhuman, which I do not admit, you will not diminiſh the evil by the Abolition. But I will venture to ſay that the preſent meaſure has not humanity for its object, or at leaſt it will not produce that effect.

The time, in which this meaſure is brought forward, I

think is quite objectionable. This is a time when we ought to foſter our Trade and improve our Manufactures, and protect our Commerce; not a time to be indulging in idle and ſpeculative opinions. If we are to try ſpeculative opinions, let us try them when we have not the ſame neceſſity of taxation. Your Colonial produce is eſſential to your taxation, and this the exigency of the war will require to be augmented, inſtead of being diminiſhed.

Sir, there is one point which I have not heard touched upon, and to which I ſhall take this opportunity of alluding; I mean the injuſtice of our legiſlating for the Colonies. I know you cannot lay taxes on them without their conſent; but there ſeems to me very little difference between laying taxes on them and affecting their intereſt by a meaſure like this. That is a queſtion however on which I only lightly touch, for the preſent.

A Right Honourable Gentleman ſpoke of what he called the horrors of the middle paſſage; but the ſtatements on this point were exaggerated, as appeared afterwards by the trial of Captain KIMBER; and I am confident that the Honourable Gentleman (Mr. WILBERFORCE) will not now urge the ſame things which he formerly did upon that ſubject, becauſe they have been proved to be unfounded. [Hear! hear! from Mr. WILBERFORCE.]

Sir, we hear a great many hard words reſpecting this trade. Robbery, rapine, murder, and all the other terrible expreſſions which the language can afford, have fallen from the lips of ſome Gentlemen in this Houſe; and we have heard much againſt Slavery as being inconſiſtent with the principles of our Conſtitution. Now that was ſo far from being the opinion of our anceſtors, that it was admitted, by them, to be neceſſary. So far has it been from being conſidered an odious thing, that no civilized nation ever exiſted upon the earth in which Slavery did not exiſt, in ſome degree or other, under different regulations, as different circumſtances might require.

Sir, the Right Honourable Gentleman will eaſily confute me if I am wrong, but I ſhall quote divine authority to this Houſe to ſhew, that the greateſt, the wiſeſt, and the happieſt nation upon earth, admitted Slavery; for in the

the 25th chapter of Leviticus, and in the 44th and 46th verſes, it is thus recorded:

"Both thy bondmen and thy bondmaids, which "thou ſhalt have, ſhall be of the Heathen, that are "round about thee; of them ſhall you have bond-"men and bondmaids.

"And thou ſhalt take them as an inheritance for "thy children after thee to inherit them for a poſſeſ-"ſion, they ſhall be thy bondmen for ever."

Now, Sir, I am ſure that the honourable and learned Gentleman who ſpoke laſt, had he attended at all to the queſtion as it really is, would have been much more moderate in his language, inſtead of dealing out, as he has done, anathemas of the moſt unfounded kind. But this queſtion has hitherto been treated quite unfairly; and I truſt it will appear to the Houſe that its proper courſe is to appoint a Committee to examine into the loſſes of thoſe who ſhall be ſufferers by the Abolition of this Trade, before any idea can be ſeriouſly entertained of that Abolition. I ſhould think that the Houſe would lay it down as a principle in the outſet of ſuch a proceeding as this, that indemnity to thoſe who may ſuffer under it, will be a diſtinguiſhing feature of any Bill that may be brought forward. For ſurely in your anxious wiſhes to favour Africans, you will not deny juſtice to your own countrymen; for it muſt be remembered that the ſhips which have been fitted up for this Trade, muſt be broken up for old timber when the trade is aboliſhed; for they will not be fit for any other trade, on account of their being built, according to Act of Parliament, of particular dimenſions. And I ſay alſo, that your having ſuffered the Trade to exiſt ſo long, is a reaſon why you cannot aboliſh it without injuſtice, unleſs you afford, to every perſon intereſted in its continuance, full indemnity for his loſs; and I ſay, that as to the town of Liverpool, it will be abſolutely ruined by that Abolition.

Now I come to the point which the Right Honourable Gentleman reminded me of; which is a declaration of mine in this Houſe, from which I do not ſhrink. What I ſaid then was what I ſhall now repeat, notwithſtanding what has been ſaid by that Right Honourable Gentleman, That knowing the benefits that have reſulted to this country

from the Slave Trade, I think it would have been adviſeable to inſtitute rather than aboliſh ſuch a Trade; for I know that if it had not been for that Trade, this country would never have been in its preſent independent ſituation. Will any one aſſert that Europeans can cultivate our Colonies? If he thinks ſo, I would adviſe him to look at the returns of the mortality of our regiments which do military ſervice there, and that will correct his judgment; for certain it is, that Europeans cannot live there.

After all, Sir, there is a leading objection to the reſolution now propoſed, independently of the merits of the Slave Trade; which is this, That it calls upon the Houſe to pledge itſelf to that which is indefinite: and you may as well ſay, we will do that of which there has been no notice, whatever loſſes that may occaſion to individuals; and all this although Parliament formerly thought it neceſſary to give a notice of ſix years of ſuch a meaſure being intended, and found it impracticable, when that time had expired. You certainly ſhould firſt ſay, "there ſhall be no "more ſhips allowed to enter into this Trade;" or you ſhould ſay, "We will aboliſh the Slave Importation Trade, "when the Colonies ſhall be in a given ſtate of black popu- "lation." In that, there would be ſomething to reſt upon; but at preſent, and upon the face of this Reſolution, there is nothing to lay hold of: we know not what may be built upon it. Neither do I think that a matter of ſuch national importance as this is, ſhould be diſcuſſed in a Houſe ſo thin, when not a fifth of the complement of its Members attend the diſcuſſion; and it will be but an indifferent triumph to the friends of the meaſure now before us, to have it carried by a majority of eleven, twelve, or perhaps twenty, in ſo thin a Houſe, when a full one ſhall reverſe the deciſion. For theſe reaſons I ſhall give my negative to this motion. I am the more inclined to do ſo, becauſe of the meaſure which, I underſtand, is to follow it, (viz. an Addreſs to His Majeſty to negociate with foreign powers for the general abolition) and which cannot be of any avail until it has received the ſanction of every branch of the legiſlature. I will only add that this meaſure appears to me to be *extremely ill* timed, when you are calling on your Sovereign

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and your Country to enter into the embarraſſments of a war, the end of which you do not pretend to be able to foreſee. On theſe grounds, although I ſhall now trouble the Houſe no further, I ſhall take an opportunity on a future occaſion to deliver my ſentiments upon this ſubject more at large.

Mr. WILBERFORCE—The ſportive manner in which the Honourable Gentleman who has juſt ſat down, has ſpoke upon the queſtion before the Houſe, contraſted as it will be with the ſerious manner in which my ſenſe of duty will lead me to treat it, will afford variety at leaſt to the Houſe. For my own part I ſhall take the ſame courſe as my friend oppoſite to me, in conſidering this queſtion, as a queſtion as important to the juſtice, and intereſting to the humanity of this Houſe, as any that ever gained the attention of the Legiſlature.

With regard to one part of the ſpeech of the Honourable General; I allude to the levity with which he treated Scripture; I am doubtful whether he might not have been checked by the regular inforcement of the orders of the Houſe, which have decorum for their baſis. Could I perſuade myſelf that the Honourable General really believes that the Slave Trade is ſanctioned by our holy religion, I ſhould be diſpoſed to pity his weakneſs, and ſhould willingly endeavour to rectify his miſtaken judgment in the ſpirit of mildneſs and conciliation. But it is impoſſible not to perceive, in the very tone and manner of his alluſion to the ſacred writings, that their authority has not been adduced by him for any purpoſe of grave and ſerious argument, on the preſent occaſion. It ſeems therefore unneceſſary for me to diſprove the allegation, that Scripture gives any countenance to the Slave Trade, eſpecially as I am fully confident that this Houſe is already impreſſed with a contrary conviction. Indeed, among the various ſignal proofs of the purity and excellence of the religion we profeſs, it is not the leaſt remarkable that not only is the *practice* of the Slave Trade forbidden, and the *principle* on which it proceeds held out for our abhorrence; but it is ſpecifically denounced as the worſt of robbery, thoſe concerned in it being branded as "the ſtealers of men." Beſides; the criminality of this practice is put on plain

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and univerſal principles, clear in their meaning, and reaſonable in their application; principles which both pointedly interdict the indulgence of vicious and mercenary wiſhes, and require us always to act on motives of love and kindneſs, and good will to man. Indeed it is one of the glories of Chriſtianity to have gradually extinguiſhed the Slave Trade, and even Slavery, wherever its influence was felt.

With regard to the arguments which have been urged to night, by a noble friend of mine, (Lord CASTLEREAGH) undoubtedly I ſhould have liſtened to them with conſiderable regret, if I had not, for many years, heard the ſame ſpecies of reaſoning a conſtant attendant on the diſcuſſion of this ſubject. One part indeed of the ſpeech of my noble friend I heard with ſatisfaction; I mean his declaration of the abhorrence and deteſtation in which he holds the Slave Trade, and which he almoſt exhauſted the powers of language to expreſs. I am concerned however to find, that notwithſtanding that abhorrence and deteſtation, my noble friend is reſolved to forego the indulgence of thoſe ſentiments, by refuſing his aſſent to the only means by which a period can be put to the Slave Trade; while at the ſame time, he never, for one moment, has himſelf propoſed any meaſure for its Abolition. When my noble friend conſiders who the perſons are who have expreſſed approbation of his ſpeech to night, and who ſeemed to dwell with delight on every word that fell from his lips; he muſt be ſtruck with it as a ſtrange circumſtance, that, if he really abhors and deteſts the Slave Trade, his ſpeech ſhould have given ſuch cordial ſatisfaction to thoſe who the moſt earneſtly wiſh for its continuance, and who are uniform in oppoſing every endeavour to procure its Abolition, or even, by regulation, to reſtrain its enormities. The Noble Lord ſays, he abhors and deteſts the Slave Trade; but the friends of that Trade think otherwiſe, or they would not have ſo loudly applauded his ſpeech. They ſeemed to ſay to him by their chears, "You ſay you de-
"teſt and abhor the Slave Trade; you may think you do,
"but it is no ſuch thing; we know you better than you
"know yourſelf: you profeſs to be an enemy to the
"*Slave* Trade, but in truth you are its beſt friend, what-

"ever

" ever ſentiments you may profeſs to feel, or with what-
" ever warmth you may expreſs thoſe feelings, if you
" ſpeak and vote with us againſt a meaſure which is
" intended for its Abolition."

My noble friend, while he blames the method which I have purſued for aboliſhing this Trade, recommends another method, which he thinks will be more effectual. Sir, it is no ſmall ſatisfaction to me in the diſcuſſion of this great queſtion to reflect, that nearly all the moſt conſiderable men for talents and reſpectability on both ſides of this Houſe, who ſeldom all agree on other ſubjects, have been able to agree with me, not only in favour of Abolition itſelf, but alſo in favour of the particular mode in which I have propoſed to effect it. I regret indeed that my noble friend is not among the number, but I ſhall never deſpair of ſucceſs while I enjoy ſuch able and diſintereſted ſupport. With reſpect to my noble friend's plan for aboliſhing the Trade, it would place the period of the Abolition, (if it would ever happen under ſuch a ſyſtem), to a very remote diſtance indeed. I even queſtion whether any plan could be adopted which would more effectually tend to perpetuate the Slave Trade, than that ſuggeſted by my noble friend. The mode which he propoſes is that of a ſyſtem of duty on the importation of Slaves. Every body who has had the good fortune to hear my noble friend in this Houſe, on any other occaſion, will admit that it is but juſtice to ſay that he makes himſelf maſter of every ſubject on which he ſpeaks. But the preſent queſtion I ſhould conceive to be an exception; becauſe he does not appear to me to be acquainted with the chief arguments on which it reſts, and has overlooked all the moſt material conſiderations on which my late Right Honourable Friend, (Mr. PITT) on whoſe ſpeech on this ſubject the Right Honourable Gentleman, who brought forward this Motion, pronounced ſo juſt an eulogium, contended for the Abolition of the African Slave Trade.

Now, Sir, with regard to the principle of duty on the importation of negroes into the Weſt India Colonies; does not my noble friend recollect, that although during the time we have been diſcuſſing this ſubject, the price of Slaves has increaſed 100 per cent. that is to ſay, from thirty

thirty to ſeventy pounds a head, a much larger increaſe than any duty which he would think of impoſing, yet that the number of Slaves imported into the Colonies has not diminiſhed? But not to dwell on this view of the ſubject; I would aſk my noble friend how he will reconcile this propoſal with another part of his ſpeech, in which he aſſerted us that it is impoſſible to enforce any law reſpecting this Trade, without the concurrence of the Colonies themſelves; that unleſs their wiſhes are in uniſon with ours, we can do nothing even in the way of regulating this Trade; and that if we ſhould proceed to aboliſh this Trade without their conſent, they would ſtill import, by means of ſmuggling, as many negroes as they ſhould want. If that will be the caſe, even with all the facilities of prevention which a total prohibition of the Trade would obviouſly afford, how is a ſyſtem of duty to anſwer the purpoſe of diminiſhing the importation? Will not the temptation to ſmuggle exiſt, as well in the caſe of a duty on importation, as in that of a prohibitory law; while the opportunity of ſmuggling will be much greater in the former than in the latter? Is not a ſyſtem of duties the direct and immediate cauſe of ſmuggling? It muſt be obvious then, that a ſyſtem of duties on the importation of negroes cannot poſſibly anſwer the purpoſe of my noble friend, which is to prevent that importation from taking place by ſmuggling. Beſides, if we cannot do any thing effectual in this matter without the conſent of the Colonies, what hope can we entertain of obtaining that conſent to the Noble Lord's ſyſtem of duty? After all, I incline to think that my noble friend puſhed his argument too far, in reſpect to the facility of ſmuggling negroes into the Iſlands, in the caſe of a prohibitory law. Can my noble friend maintain that it is more eaſy to evade the vigilance of our Cuſtom-houſe officers and Cruizers, in ſhips which are filled with a cargo of negroes, than in thoſe which come with lumber or proviſions from America, articles which we know the Colonies in the Weſt Indies greatly want to introduce, but which our Cuſtom-houſe regulations have made it extremely difficult, if not impoſſible, to effect. We all know that the difficulty of eluding the vigilance of the Cuſtom-houſe officers and Cruizers muſt be greater

e caſe of a total prohibition with regard to ſhips
with negroes, than if they were laden with any
article, for in the latter caſe, there being nothing il-
in the importation of the articles themſelves, but
in their being brought in one kind of ſhip rather than
er, the chance of eſcaping detection is greatly in-
ed. With regard to dead materials alſo their form may
be changed without injury, and means of conceal-
may be adopted, neither of which would be prac-
e with regard to a cargo of Slaves. However cruelly
nay be treated, ſtill there muſt be ſome reſemblance to
nity in their appearance, and ſome regard to the preſer-
of life muſt be ſhewn in the mode of ſtowing them.
rt, I am perſuaded, that the ſmuggling of negroes,
he importation ſhall have been totally prohibited, is
ject of juſt apprehenſion, and as an argument againſt
bolition, amounts to almoſt nothing. By Britiſh ſhips
l, liable as they would be to ſeizure, not only on the
of Africa during their ſtay there, but on the Middle
e, and afterwards in the Weſt Indies, the thing may
nounced impoſſible; and it might be ſhewn that the
lties would be equally great in the caſe of foreigners.
w as to our obtaining the conſent of the Colonies to
prohibiting the importation of negroes, or to a duty
impoſed upon that importation; I own that I have
pe of either: not only is it improbable in theory,
perience is decidedly againſt it. In the year 1797 a
eſpectable Member of this Houſe (Mr. ELLIS)
this Houſe to addreſs His Majeſty, that he would
ciouſly pleaſed to conſult with the Colonial legiſla-
take ſuch meaſures as might conduce to the graduaſ
ion of the African Slave Trade; and that Addreſs
greed to, was attempted to be carried into effect.
at was the reſult? The Addreſs was tranſmitted to
lonies by a perſon ready to hear every thing they
urge for themſelves, and as likely as any body to
r their prejudices ([illegible]). It was re-
in ſome places with a declaration, "That how-
they might, in ſome inſtances, take meaſures to
ove the condition of their Slaves, they moſt frankly
red, that it was with no view to the Abolition of

" the Slave Trade; for they conſidered that Trade as " their birth-right, which we were bound never to take " from them, and that we ſhould deceive ourſelves by " ſuppoſing that they would agree to the Abolition." Will my Noble Friend, then, ſtill talk of the willingneſs of the Colonies to co-operate with us? This mode of conduct however, this frank dealing of ſome of the Colonies was far more agreeable to me than that of others, who, uſing more civil language, had leſs ſincerity in their declarations, and who did appear to fall in with our views, but as there is every reaſon to believe, not for the purpoſe of furthering our object, but in order to thwart it.

After ſaying this, I ought to give proof of my aſſertion, which I ſhall do by reading a letter from the Governor of Dominica (Governor PREVOST) who, when aſked what ſteps had been taken, in conſequence of the Reſolution of this Houſe in 1797, thus anſwers: " The Act of the " Legiſlature, intituled, ' An Act for the encouragement, ' protection, and better government of Slaves,' *appears to* " *have been conſidered, from the day it was paſſed until this* " *hour, as a* POLITICAL MEASURE *to avert the interference* " *of the Mother-Country in the management of Slaves.*"

After this has been ſo freely declared, it certainly is a little trying to the temper, to be referred to the willing co-operation of the Weſt India Legiſlatures in any rational meaſure which the Legiſlature of this country may adopt, for the Abolition of the African Slave Trade.

My Noble Friend ſays, that though this Houſe came to an agreement in the year 1792, to aboliſh this Trade, yet that no blame is imputable to this Houſe for the interval between 1792 and the preſent period, for that the thing then agreed upon was found impracticable. Alas! alas! I am afraid, indeed I am, that the conduct of this Houſe is much too capable of a very different interpretation. When in 1792 the Houſe came to thoſe Reſolutions to which we have had occaſion ſo frequently to allude, there was a natural feeling of abhorrence and deteſtation ſtirring in the minds of moſt men, indeed I may ſay, of all men not connected with the Slave Trade, which led them to aſſent to the Abolition of it; and they acted with a *laudable zeal* on that occaſion. They had, however, no-

thing

thing but a general love of humanity to keep that zeal alive. But perſonal intereſt has another ſort of influence upon the human character. The paſſion which it creates is cool, collected, ſteady and permanent, and is built upon a laſting principle; whereas, I am ſorry to ſay, that the feelings of humanity and the compunctions of conſcience, are in general of a far more fleeting nature; and hence it is, that intereſt ſo often triumphs over the fineſt feelings of our nature. Thus, although in the year 1791 three hundred perſons voted againſt the Abolition, yet in the year 1792, when a proper feeling upon it had been excited, there was a very large majority of this Houſe in favour of that meaſure; and yet, ſo clear is it, that where there is no perſonal intereſt, the zeal of mankind abates, that in this very matter, the zeal of the Members of this Houſe actually died away, and they became almoſt indifferent about it. They were ſatisfied with this one exertion, and, on ſubſequent occaſions, ſtaid away from the diſcuſſion, and, although the whole of the country had declared the Trade to be the moſt abominable ſyſtem of cruelty that ever diſgraced any part of the civilized world, yet nothing effectual was done. There is a ſhame in the recollection of ſome of theſe events, and I muſt ſay that this Houſe and the public, are indebted to my Right Honourable Friend (Mr. Fox,) for propoſing a vote to reſcue this Houſe from ſo diſgraceful a ſituation, and to do juſtice to the injured character of Parliament.

As to the wording of this Reſolution, undoubtedly I, as well as my Right Honourable Friend, who brings it forward, ſhould have preferred a Bill for the total Abolition of the African Trade, if we had had a proſpect of paſſing it, in the courſe of the preſent ſeſſion. But it ſeemed to be the judgment of others, better acquainted with the ſtate of public buſineſs than myſelf, and whoſe feelings are as warm and as ſincere as my own, that there was no probability of carrying the Bill this ſeſſion, and that it was therefore neceſſary to conſider of ſome other meaſure which ſhould hold forth a hope to the public, that we ſhall do ſomething towards the atchievement of this great and good work, in a ſubſequent ſeſſion of Parliament. And here let my Noble Friend remember, that he

he overlooked entirely the grand diſtinction between a Reſolution and a Bill. The one is the labour of one night only: it is decided in one debate.

——— concurritur: Horæ
Momento, cita mors venit, aut victoria læta.

But upon a Bill there are many deliberations: and the ſubject is too dear to me, to run any riſk whatever, of being defeated. Not that I think the Legiſlature would decide againſt it, when, under all the circumſtances of ſuch a caſe, the opinion of the Legiſlature can be fairly taken; but at ſo late a period, the time neceſſary for the diſcuſſion of ſo important a meaſure, could not be allowed to it, ſo that diſcuſſion might be ſaid to be precluded. I feel this the more forcibly, ſince it was the objection which was made on a former occaſion, when a Bill was ſent up to the other Houſe. That Bill was not negatived, but it was ſtated to have come to the Houſe at a period of the ſeſſion which rendered it impoſſible to beſtow upon it that diſcuſſion which the great importance of the ſubject demanded.

There was an argument or two which my Noble Friend made uſe of, on which I would only ſay a few words. He obſerved that we ſhould proceed with the Slave Trade as we did with evils at home. Now, the way in which we proceed with the greateſt evils we have at home is, to ſentence thoſe who are the authors of them to ſuffer death for their crimes. But moſt of the crimes ſo puniſhed in this country are compaſſion itſelf, when compared to the cruelties of the Slave Trade. Theſe have indeed excited the deteſtation and abhorrence of my Noble Friend, yet he ſeems to think that we ſhould only endeavour to get rid of them *gradually as we would of evils at home*. What evils my Noble Friend can poſſibly allude to, I cannot conceive. There certainly are none, that have any affinity with the Slave Trade, which have exiſted in this country ſince thoſe days of gloomy bigotry and furious fanaticiſm, from the horrors of which we are now moſt happily exempt. The greateſt evil of our condition that I know is, the continuance in our name of a Traffic in Human Beings, the reproach of which we ought no longer to endure. If the Members of this Houſe could actually ſee one

one thouſandth part of the evils of that practice which they have, for ſo many years, under one pretence or other, been prevailed on to ſuffer to be continued; I do in my conſcience verily believe, they would not ſuffer the Slave Trade to exiſt for another year, if they would for another hour. But it is becauſe they do not ſee; becauſe ſome among us, receive the profits, and do not ſee, the ſufferings of their fellow creatures; becauſe the objects, as they actually exiſt, are not allowed to obtrude upon their viſion, and interpoſe the reality of things between theſe Gentlemen's conſciences and their calculations:—It is for theſe reaſons that arguments ſuch as we conſtantly hear, in favour of the continuance of the Slave Trade, are heard at all. If one thouſandth part of the real horrors of this Traffick (I repeat it) were to be the ſubject of actual viſion with theſe its defenders, none of their arguments, I am confident, would be urged again.

With regard to the time and the circumſtances under which this queſtion comes before us; I muſt fairly tell you Sir, that I feel very differently from many others who are even friends to the Abolition. Were it left to me to determine, I ſhould have no difficulty in ſaying that no time is unfit for doing an act of unqueſtionable humanity and ſignal juſtice; and I ſhould add, that if ever there was a period in which this country, circumſtanced as we are, had an opportunity of ſetting a glorious example to all the other nations of the earth, and of giving a proof of the ineſtimable advantages of a free conſtitution, of an enlightened policy, and of all the bleſſings which Providence has beſtowed upon us, the preſent is that moment; and we ought to hail it with joy, as giving us an opportunity of ſhewing to the world, that we are not deſirous of monopolizing but of extending theſe bleſſings as widely as poſſible; that we are not a ſordid race, looking excluſively to our own intereſt, and purſuing it through the medium of oppreſſion to others; (a policy as ſhort ſighted as the principle on which it is founded is unjuſt, for Providence never deſigned that the real proſperity and happineſs of any nation, ſhould be founded on injuſtice;) but that we are a nation governed by the rules of juſtice, which are dictated by true wiſdom. No ſociety (any more

more than any individual) can be long upheld in proſperity upon any other principle. This is a truth, however it may appear to men of mercenary minds, which is well eſtabliſhed, and which all hiſtory tends abundantly to confirm. Shall we then continue a ſyſtem of injuſtice and inhumanity when we have ſo much experience of its ruinous effects on the condition of mankind?

Sir, it appears to me improbable that any gentleman will attempt to refute theſe principles, as applied generally to the affairs of the world, however they may be diſpoſed to doubt their application to particular caſes. But every time I look at this ſubject, even as a mere queſtion of calculation, I am more and more convinced that of all the poſitions which have, at any time, been laid down in this Houſe, the moſt incontrovertible was that which was ſtated by my Right Honourable Friend (Mr. PITT) now no more, by which he proved, in a manner which approached as nearly to demonſtration as any political reaſoning could poſſibly do, that the population of the Weſt India Iſlands may be maintained from their own internal reſources, without having recourſe to the African Slave Trade. And here I would aſk my Noble Friend himſelf, whether if this be fairly made out, he will not admit that it would be for the intereſt of the Weſt Indies to aboliſh the African Slave Trade.

My Noble Friend talks of a duty on the importation of ſlaves to be expended in promoting the increaſe of population in the Iſlands. Sir, after what we have ſeen of the manner in which this Trade is carried on, and the principle on which it is founded, together with the treatment which the negroes receive in ſome parts of the plantations, it is really idle to talk of promoting in ſuch a way the negroe population of the Weſt Indies. Let my Noble Friend ſee that the negroes are well fed, let him ſee that due regard is had to their health, to their habits, to their domeſtic comforts, and, above all, to their moral improvement; and he will ſoon find them rapidly to increaſe in numbers; for it is an indiſputable fact that, in America, where theſe points are attended to, the ſlaves actually increaſe in ſuch a proportion as to double their number in *from twenty* to twenty-four years. Theſe are the means,

(without

(without any duty), by which their population may be increaſed. And I ſhall conclude what I have at preſent to ſubmit to the Houſe upon this ſubject, by laying in my claim to prove hereafter, that the meaſure which, more than any other, will conduce to this end, is the Abolition of the African Slave Trade—I maintain that ſuch is the unavoidable inference of the evidence which we have before us. And why is it that this would be the effect of the Abolition of the African Slave Trade? Becauſe, as is obvious, it would then become the direct and immediate intereſt of the Planters to keep up their ſtock by breeding; and, having no other reſource, they would, naturally, be led to do every thing which was likely to have the effect of increaſing the population. But while the African Slave importation continues; ſo long will the exiſting ſyſtem of negligence and indifference to the improvement of their ſtock continue to operate. Gentlemen who are intereſted in Weſt India plantations, and who reſide here, know nothing of this matter except what they hear from their agents, and the managers of their eſtates, in the Weſt Indies: and while it is left to the management of theſe agents, and the African Slave Trade is continued, I can aſſure them that proper encouragement to the increaſe of population in the Weſt Indies, will never be afforded. Let the Abolition of the African Slave Trade once take place; the Planters and the managers of eſtates in the Weſt Indies, will know what they have to expect. But the regulations to which my Noble Friend has alluded are of ſuch a nature, that you would never be able to give effect to them; becauſe, they could not be enforced without an inquiſitorial power. And the ſyſtem of ſeeing what every man is doing in his domeſtic ſyſtem, eſpecially in points affecting his character for humanity, is a thing unpleaſant in itſelf, and could never become efficient. But to place a perſon of that deſcription in a ſituation wherein the continuance of his profit would wholly depend on the natural increaſe of his negroes, as would be the caſe if the Slave Trade were aboliſhed, would have an immediate, powerful, and rapid effect in producing what we muſt all deſire; not more the permanent proſperity as well as honour of this country, than the increaſe of the

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and univerſal principles, clear in their meaning, and reaſonable in their application; principles which both pointedly interdict the indulgence of vicious and mercenary wiſhes, and require us always to act on motives of love and kindneſs, and good will to man. Indeed it is one of the glories of Chriſtianity to have gradually extinguiſhed the Slave Trade, and even Slavery, wherever its influence was felt.

With regard to the arguments which have been urged to night, by a noble friend of mine, (Lord CASTLEREAGH) undoubtedly I ſhould have liſtened to them with conſiderable regret, if I had not, for many years, heard the ſame ſpecies of reaſoning a conſtant attendant on the diſcuſſion of this ſubject. One part indeed of the ſpeech of my noble friend I heard with ſatisfaction; I mean his declaration of the abhorrence and deteſtation in which he holds the Slave Trade, and which he almoſt exhauſted the powers of language to expreſs. I am concerned however to find, that notwithſtanding that abhorrence and deteſtation, my noble friend is reſolved to forego the indulgence of thoſe ſentiments, by refuſing his aſſent to the only means by which a period can be put to the Slave Trade; while at the ſame time, he never, for one moment, has himſelf propoſed any meaſure for its Abolition. When my noble friend conſiders who the perſons are who have expreſſed approbation of his ſpeech to night, and who ſeemed to dwell with delight on every word that fell from his lips; he muſt be ſtruck with it as a ſtrange circumſtance, that, if he really abhors and deteſts the Slave Trade, his ſpeech ſhould have given ſuch cordial ſatisfaction to thoſe who the moſt earneſtly wiſh for its continuance, and who are uniform in oppoſing every endeavour to procure its Abolition, or even, by regulation, to reſtrain its enormities. The Noble Lord ſays, he abhors and deteſts the Slave Trade; but the friends of that Trade think otherwiſe, or they would not have ſo loudly applauded his ſpeech. They ſeemed to ſay to him by their chears, "You ſay you de-
"teſt and abhor the Slave Trade; you may think you do,
"but it is no ſuch thing; we know you better than you
"know yourſelf: you profeſs to be an enemy to the
"Slave Trade, but in truth you are its beſt friend, what-
"ever

" ever ſentiments you may profeſs to feel, or with what-
" ever warmth you may expreſs thoſe feelings, if you
" ſpeak and vote with us againſt a meaſure which is
" intended for its Abolition."

My noble friend, while he blames the method which I have purſued for aboliſhing this Trade, recommends another method, which he thinks will be more effectual. Sir, it is no ſmall ſatisfaction to me in the diſcuſſion of this great queſtion to reflect, that nearly all the moſt conſiderable men for talents and reſpectability on both ſides of this Houſe, who ſeldom all agree on other ſubjects, have been able to agree with me, not only in favour of Abolition itſelf, but alſo in favour of the particular mode in which I have propoſed to effect it. I regret indeed that my noble friend is not among the number, but I ſhall never deſpair of ſucceſs while I enjoy ſuch able and diſintereſted ſupport. With reſpect to my noble friend's plan for aboliſhing the Trade, it would place the period of the Abolition, (if it would ever happen under ſuch a ſyſtem), to a very remote diſtance indeed. I even queſtion whether any plan could be adopted which would more effectually tend to perpetuate the Slave Trade, than that ſuggeſted by my noble friend. The mode which he propoſes is that of a ſyſtem of duty on the importation of Slaves. Every body who has had the good fortune to hear my noble friend in this Houſe, on any other occaſion, will admit that it is but juſtice to ſay that he makes himſelf maſter of every ſubject on which he ſpeaks. But the preſent queſtion I ſhould conceive to be an exception; becauſe he does not appear to me to be acquainted with the chief arguments on which it reſts, and has overlooked all the moſt material conſiderations on which my late Right Honourable Friend, (Mr. PITT) on whoſe ſpeech on this ſubject the Right Honourable Gentleman, who brought forward this Motion, pronounced ſo juſt an eulogium, contended for the Abolition of the African Slave Trade.

Now, Sir, with regard to the principle of duty on the importation of negroes into the Weſt India Colonies; does not my noble friend recollect, that although during the time we have been diſcuſſing this ſubject, the price of Slaves has increaſed 100 per cent. that is to ſay, from thirty

thirty to ſeventy pounds a head, a much larger increaſe than any duty which he would think of impoſing, yet that the number of Slaves imported into the Colonies has not diminiſhed? But not to dwell on this view of the ſubject; I would aſk my noble friend how he will reconcile this propoſal with another part of his ſpeech, in which he aſſured us that it is impoſſible to enforce any law reſpecting this Trade, without the concurrence of the Colonies themſelves; that unleſs their wiſhes are in uniſon with ours, we can do nothing even in the way of regulating this Trade; and that if we ſhould proceed to aboliſh this Trade without their conſent, they would ſtill import, by means of ſmuggling, as many negroes as they ſhould want. If that will be the caſe, even with all the facilities of prevention which a total prohibition of the Trade would obviouſly afford, how is a ſyſtem of duty to anſwer the purpoſe of diminiſhing the importation? Will not the temptation to ſmuggle exiſt, as well in the caſe of a duty on importation, as in that of a prohibitory law; while the opportunity of ſmuggling will be much greater in the former than in the latter? Is not a ſyſtem of duties the direct and immediate cauſe of ſmuggling? It muſt be obvious then, that a ſyſtem of duties on the importation of negroes cannot poſſibly anſwer the purpoſe of my noble friend, which is to prevent that importation from taking place by ſmuggling. Beſides, if we cannot do any thing effectual in this matter without the conſent of the Colonies, what hope can we entertain of obtaining that conſent to the Noble Lord's ſyſtem of duty? After all, I incline to think that my noble friend puſhed his argument too far, in reſpect to the facility of ſmuggling negroes into the Iſlands, in the caſe of a prohibitory law. Can my noble friend maintain that it is more eaſy to evade the vigilance of our Cuſtom-houſe officers and Cruizers, in ſhips which are filled with a cargo of negroes, than in thoſe which come with lumber or proviſions from America, articles which we know the Colonies in the Weſt Indies greatly want to introduce, but which our Cuſtom-houſe regulations have made it extremely difficult, if not impoſſible, to effect. We all know that the difficulty of eluding the vigilance of the Cuſtom-houſe officers and Cruizers muſt be greater

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in the caſe of a total prohibition with regard to ſhips laden with negroes, than if they were laden with any other article, for in the latter caſe, there being nothing illegal in the importation of the articles themſelves, but only in their being brought in one kind of ſhip rather than another, the chance of eſcaping detection is greatly increaſed. With regard to dead materials alſo their form may often be changed without injury, and means of concealment may be adopted, neither of which would be practicable with regard to a cargo of Slaves. However cruelly they may be treated, ſtill there muſt be ſome reſemblance to humanity in their appearance, and ſome regard to the preſervation of life muſt be ſhewn in the mode of ſtowing them. In ſhort, I am perſuaded, that the ſmuggling of negroes, after the importation ſhall have been totally prohibited, is no ſubject of juſt apprehenſion, and as an argument againſt the Abolition, amounts to almoſt nothing. By Britiſh ſhips indeed, liable as they would be to ſeizure, not only on the Coaſt of Africa during their ſtay there, but on the Middle Paſſage, and afterwards in the Weſt Indies, the thing may be pronounced impoſſible; and it might be ſhewn that the difficulties would be equally great in the caſe of foreigners.

Now as to our obtaining the conſent of the Colonies to a law prohibiting the importation of negroes, or to a duty being impoſed upon that importation; I own that I have no hope of either: not only is it improbable in theory, but experience is decidedly againſt it. In the year 1797 a very reſpectable Member of this Houſe (Mr. ELLIS) moved this Houſe to addreſs His Majeſty, that he would be graciouſly pleaſed to conſult with the Colonial legiſlature, to take ſuch meaſures as might conduce to the gradual Abolition of the African Slave Trade; and that Addreſs being agreed to, was attempted to be carried into effect. But what was the reſult? The Addreſs was tranſmitted to the Colonies by a perſon ready to hear every thing they could urge for themſelves, and as likely as any body to conquer their prejudices ([illegible]). It was received in ſome places with a declaration, "That however they might, in ſome inſtances, take meaſures to "improve the condition of their Slaves, they moſt frankly "declared, that it was with no view to the Abolition of

" the Slave Trade; for they conſidered that Trade as " their birth-right, which we were bound never to take " from them, and that we ſhould deceive ourſelves by " ſuppoſing that they would agree to the Abolition." Will my Noble Friend, then, ſtill talk of the willingneſs of the Colonies to co-operate with us? This mode of conduct however, this frank dealing of ſome of the Colonies was far more agreeable to me than that of others, who, uſing more civil language, had leſs ſincerity in their declarations, and who did appear to fall in with our views, but as there is every reaſon to believe, not for the purpoſe of furthering our object, but in order to thwart it.

After ſaying this, I ought to give proof of my aſſertion, which I ſhall do by reading a letter from the Governor of Dominica (Governor PREVOST) who, when aſked what ſteps had been taken, in conſequence of the Reſolution of this Houſe in 1797, thus anſwers: " The Act of the " Legiſlature, intituled, 'An Act for the encouragement, 'protection, and better government of Slaves,' *appears to* " *have been conſidered, from the day it was paſſed until this* " *hour, as a* POLITICAL MEASURE *to avert the interference* " *of the Mother-Country in the management of Slaves.*"

After this has been ſo freely declared, it certainly is a little trying to the temper, to be referred to the willing co-operation of the Weſt India Legiſlatures in any rational meaſure which the Legiſlature of this country may adopt, for the Abolition of the African Slave Trade.

My Noble Friend ſays, that though this Houſe came to an agreement in the year 1792, to aboliſh this Trade, yet that no blame is imputable to this Houſe for the interval between 1792 and the preſent period, for that the thing then agreed upon was found impracticable. Alas! alas! I am afraid, indeed I am, that the conduct of this Houſe is much too capable of a very different interpretation. When in 1792 the Houſe came to thoſe Reſolutions to which we have had occaſion ſo frequently to allude, there was a natural feeling of abhorrence and deteſtation ſtirring in the minds of moſt men, indeed I may ſay, of all men not connected with the Slave Trade, which led them to aſſent to the Abolition of it; and they acted with a laudable zeal on that occaſion. They had, however, no-

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thing but a general love of humanity to keep that zeal alive. But perſonal intereſt has another ſort of influence upon the human character. The paſſion which it creates is cool, collected, ſteady and permanent, and is built upon a laſting principle; whereas, I am ſorry to ſay, that the feelings of humanity and the compunctions of conſcience, are in general of a far more fleeting nature; and hence it is, that intereſt ſo often triumphs over the fineſt feelings of our nature. Thus, although in the year 1791 three hundred perſons voted againſt the Abolition, yet in the year 1792, when a proper feeling upon it had been excited, there was a very large majority of this Houſe in favour of that meaſure; and yet, ſo clear is it, that where there is no perſonal intereſt, the zeal of mankind abates, that in this very matter, the zeal of the Members of this Houſe actually died away, and they became almoſt indifferent about it. They were ſatisfied with this one exertion, and, on ſubſequent occaſions, ſtaid away from the diſcuſſion, and, although the whole of the country had declared the Trade to be the moſt abominable ſyſtem of cruelty that ever diſgraced any part of the civilized world, yet nothing effectual was done. There is a ſhame in the recollection of ſome of theſe events, and I muſt ſay that this Houſe and the public, are indebted to my Right Honourable Friend (Mr. Fox,) for propoſing a vote to reſcue this Houſe from ſo diſgraceful a ſituation, and to do juſtice to the injured character of Parliament.

As to the wording of this Reſolution, undoubtedly I, as well as my Right Honourable Friend, who brings it forward, ſhould have preferred a Bill for the total Abolition of the African Trade, if we had had a proſpect of paſſing it, in the courſe of the preſent ſeſſion. But it ſeemed to be the judgment of others, better acquainted with the ſtate of public buſineſs than myſelf, and whoſe feelings are as warm and as ſincere as my own, that there was no probability of carrying the Bill this ſeſſion, and that it was therefore neceſſary to conſider of ſome other meaſure which ſhould hold forth a hope to the public, that we ſhall do ſomething towards the atchievement of this great and good work, in a ſubſequent ſeſſion of Parliament. And here let my Noble Friend remember, that he

he overlooked entirely the grand diſtinction between a Reſolution and a Bill. The one is the labour of one night only: it is decided in one debate.

——— concurritur: Horæ
Momento, cita mors venit, aut victoria læta.

But upon a Bill there are many deliberations: and the ſubject is too dear to me, to run any riſk whatever, of being defeated. Not that I think the Legiſlature would decide againſt it, when, under all the circumſtances of ſuch a caſe, the opinion of the Legiſlature can be fairly taken; but at ſo late a period, the time neceſſary for the diſcuſſion of ſo important a meaſure, could not be allowed to it, ſo that diſcuſſion might be ſaid to be precluded. I feel this the more forcibly, ſince it was the objection which was made on a former occaſion, when a Bill was ſent up to the other Houſe. That Bill was not negatived, but it was ſtated to have come to the Houſe at a period of the ſeſſion which rendered it impoſſible to beſtow upon it that diſcuſſion which the great importance of the ſubject demanded.

There was an argument or two which my Noble Friend made uſe of, on which I would only ſay a few words. He obſerved that we ſhould proceed with the Slave Trade as we did with evils at home. Now, the way in which we proceed with the greateſt evils we have at home is, to ſentence thoſe who are the authors of them to ſuffer death for their crimes. But moſt of the crimes ſo puniſhed in this country are compaſſion itſelf, when compared to the cruelties of the Slave Trade. Theſe have indeed excited the deteſtation and abhorrence of my Noble Friend, yet he ſeems to think that we ſhould only endeavour to get rid of them *gradually as we would of evils at home*. What evils my Noble Friend can poſſibly allude to, I cannot conceive. There certainly are none, that have any affinity with the Slave Trade, which have exiſted in this country ſince thoſe days of gloomy bigotry and furious fanaticiſm, from the horrors of which we are now moſt happily exempt. The greateſt evil of our condition that I know is, the continuance in our name of a Traffic in Human Beings, the reproach of which we ought no longer to endure. If the Members of this Houſe could actually ſee

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one thouſandth part of the evils of that practice which they have, for ſo many years, under one pretence or other, been prevailed on to ſuffer to be continued; I do in my conſcience verily believe, they would not ſuffer the Slave Trade to exiſt for another year, if they would for another hour. But it is becauſe they do not ſee; becauſe ſome among us, receive the profits, and do not ſee, the ſufferings of their fellow creatures; becauſe the objects, as they actually exiſt, are not allowed to obtrude upon their viſion, and interpoſe the reality of things between theſe Gentlemen's conſciences and their calculations:—It is for theſe reaſons that arguments ſuch as we conſtantly hear, in favour of the continuance of the Slave Trade, are heard at all. If one thouſandth part of the real horrors of this Traffick (I repeat it) were to be the ſubject of actual viſion with theſe its defenders, none of their arguments, I am confident, would be urged again.

With regard to the time and the circumſtances under which this queſtion comes before us; I muſt fairly tell you Sir, that I feel very differently from many others who are even friends to the Abolition. Were it left to me to determine, I ſhould have no difficulty in ſaying that no time is unfit for doing an act of unqueſtionable humanity and ſignal juſtice; and I ſhould add, that if ever there was a period in which this country, circumſtanced as we are, had an opportunity of ſetting a glorious example to all the other nations of the earth, and of giving a proof of the ineſtimable advantages of a free conſtitution, of an enlightened policy, and of all the bleſſings which Providence has beſtowed upon us, the preſent is that moment; and we ought to hail it with joy, as giving us an opportunity of ſhewing to the world, that we are not deſirous of monopolizing but of extending theſe bleſſings as widely as poſſible; that we are not a ſordid race, looking excluſively to our own intereſt, and purſuing it through the medium of oppreſſion to others; (a policy as ſhort ſighted as the principle on which it is founded is unjuſt, for Providence never deſigned that the real proſperity and happineſs of any nation, ſhould be founded on injuſtice;) but that we are a nation governed by the rules of juſtice, which are dictated by true wiſdom. No ſociety (any more

more than any individual) can be long upheld in profperity upon any other principle. This is a truth, however it may appear to men of mercenary minds, which is well eſtabliſhed, and which all hiſtory tends abundantly to confirm. Shall we then continue a ſyſtem of injuſtice and inhumanity when we have ſo much experience of its ruinous effects on the condition of mankind?

Sir, it appears to me improbable that any gentleman will attempt to refute theſe principles, as applied generally to the affairs of the world, however they may be diſpoſed to doubt their application to particular caſes. But every time I look at this ſubject, even as a mere queſtion of calculation, I am more and more convinced that of all the poſitions which have, at any time, been laid down in this Houſe, the moſt incontrovertible was that which was ſtated by my Right Honourable Friend (Mr. PITT) now no more, by which he proved, in a manner which approached as nearly to demonſtration as any political reaſoning could poſſibly do, that the population of the Weſt India Iſlands may be maintained from their own internal reſources, without having recourſe to the African Slave Trade. And here I would aſk my Noble Friend himſelf, whether if this be fairly made out, he will not admit that it would be for the intereſt of the Weſt Indies to aboliſh the African Slave Trade.

My Noble Friend talks of a duty on the importation of ſlaves to be expended in promoting the increaſe of population in the Iſlands. Sir, after what we have ſeen of the manner in which this Trade is carried on, and the principle on which it is founded, together with the treatment which the negroes receive in ſome parts of the plantations, it is really idle to talk of promoting in ſuch a way the negroe population of the Weſt Indies. Let my Noble Friend ſee that the negroes are well fed, let him ſee that due regard is had to their health, to their habits, to their domeſtic comforts, and, above all, to their moral improvement; and he will ſoon find them rapidly to increaſe in numbers; for it is an indiſputable fact that, in America, where theſe points are attended to, the ſlaves actually increaſe in ſuch a proportion as to double their number in *from twenty to twenty-four years*. Theſe are the means,

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(without any duty), by which their population may be increaſed. And I ſhall conclude what I have at preſent to ſubmit to the Houſe upon this ſubject, by laying in my claim to prove hereafter, that the meaſure which, more than any other, will conduce to this end, is the Abolition of the African Slave Trade—I maintain that ſuch is the unavoidable inference of the evidence which we have before us. And why is it that this would be the effect of the Abolition of the African Slave Trade? Becauſe, as is obvious, it would then become the direct and immediate intereſt of the Planters to keep up their ſtock by breeding; and, having no other reſource, they would, naturally, be led to do every thing which was likely to have the effect of increaſing the population. But while the African Slave importation continues; ſo long will the exiſting ſyſtem of negligence and indifference to the improvement of their ſtock continue to operate. Gentlemen who are intereſted in Weſt India plantations, and who reſide here, know nothing of this matter except what they hear from their agents, and the managers of their eſtates, in the Weſt Indies: and while it is left to the management of theſe agents, and the African Slave Trade is continued, I can aſſure them that proper encouragement to the increaſe of population in the Weſt Indies, will never be afforded. Let the Abolition of the African Slave Trade once take place; the Planters and the managers of eſtates in the Weſt Indies, will know what they have to expect. But the regulations to which my Noble Friend has alluded are of ſuch a nature, that you would never be able to give effect to them; becauſe, they could not be enforced without an inquiſitorial power. And the ſyſtem of ſeeing what every man is doing in his domeſtic ſyſtem, eſpecially in points affecting his character for humanity, is a thing unpleaſant in itſelf, and could never become efficient. But to place a perſon of that deſcription in a ſituation wherein the continuance of his profit would wholly depend on the natural increaſe of his negroes, as would be the caſe if the Slave Trade were aboliſhed, would have an immediate, powerful, and rapid effect in producing what we muſt all deſire; not more the permanent proſperity as well as honour of this country, than the increaſe of the

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wealth of the Weſt Indies, and both theſe effects, I am perſuaded, would follow the Abolition of the African Slave Trade.

Sir W. YOUNG—I was anxious, Sir, to call your attention thus early, becauſe I am not one of thoſe whom my Honourable Friend (Mr. WILBERFORCE) alluded to, as having cheared the Noble Lord (Lord CASTLEREAGH) who ſpoke before him, and who look up to that Noble Lord, as a patron.—I diſclaim any wiſh for the ſupport of the Noble Lord, who has not indeed ſurrendered to its enemies the policy of the Slave Trade, but who has ſurrendered the principle of juſtice and humanity on which it is to be carried on; and I muſt confeſs, I think it is in ſuch ſupport the chief weakneſs of the caſe conſiſts. There is one way in which this queſtion may be conſidered with advantage, and to that I beg the attention of the Houſe, while I ſhall narrow what I have to ſay; for I have not the eloquence of the Honourable and Learned Gentleman (the SOLICITOR GENERAL), againſt the effects of which I muſt guard the Houſe, while I complain a little of the uſe to which it has been applied.—I was in hopes we ſhould not have heard of rapine, robbery, and murder, as applied to the Weſt India Iſlands, and I am in hopes that the moderation and good ſenſe of the Houſe will not attach thoſe epithets to the character of thoſe who are connected with this Traffick, and who have ſhewn, in a former war, and who are ſhewing in this war, ſo much loyalty and attachment to their Sovereign. Under theſe impreſſions and with theſe feelings, whenever this queſtion has been agitated, though we have found the advantage of the deliberative wiſdom of this Houſe, yet we have felt that the diſcuſſion of this queſtion, and particularly the paſſing a vote of this kind, has in a few months afterwards, produced great miſchief in the Colonies, with reſpect to the property and the perſonal ſafety of every individual who happens to be branded with the name of a Planter.

Sir, I conſider this Reſolution as a prelude to a Bill for the Abolition of the Slave Trade; and I conſider that great *queſtion* as leading to another moſt important meaſure,

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the emancipation of all the Slaves in the Weſt Indies, and I would aſk Gentlemen who are deſirous of aboliſhing that Trade, whether they think that the emancipated Slaves may not become troubleſome and even dangerous, both to their employers and themſelves? And I would aſk alſo, whether a different ſtate of property will not be the reſult of the meaſure now propoſed? Whether on the paſſing of this Reſolution, the property, which is now freehold property of inheritance, will not, inſtantly, be converted into a life intereſt merely?—Under theſe circumſtances the credit of Weſt India property will be greatly diminiſhed by this meaſure; for I would put it to any Gentleman in this Houſe, whether if he had laid out any large ſum of money, by way of mortgage, on any of the Weſt India Plantations, he would not immediately on the paſſing this Reſolution, or any meaſure tending to the Abolition of the African Slave Trade, call in his money, thinking it inſecure, if there ſhall be no more importation of Slaves to cultivate thoſe iſlands? And I would put it to any Member of this Houſe, whether, in ſuch a caſe, he would not think it his duty to call in property ſo laid out in his name, if it were the property of an infant to whom he was guardian?

But the Noble Lord adverted to a duty to be impoſed on the importation of negroes into the Weſt Indies, to be given by way of bounty on the increaſe of population. Now I can aſſure the Houſe, there does not appear to be any negligence in the Weſt Indies with regard to population, for I have not only been in the Weſt Indies within theſe three years, to ſee ſome property I have there, but have lived a great deal there, and have acted as a Magiſtrate there, and I never ſaw an inſtance where a child was born, that due care was not taken to rear it.

But it is ſtated that the Slave Trade has increaſed ſince the year 1792. Now, I think it is a very remarkable circumſtance, that the Slave Trade ſhould be ſo much at a ſtand. Since 1787, there is not the difference of three hundred. [Here the Honourable Baronet entered into a detail which was intended to ſhew, that the number of Slaves carried from Africa had not encreaſed of late years. He alſo maintained that the proportion of Slaves on the Coaſt of Africa, who were condemned to Slavery for

crimes, was much greater than was generally ſuppoſed; and argued from thence, that if we did not deal in them, they would either be ſold to other nations engaged in the Traffick, or they would be murdered by their Chiefs; ſo that he could not agree with the Noble Lord (CASTLEREAGH) on the ſurrender he had made of the queſtion, ſo far as it related to juſtice and humanity, of our being concerned in carrying on the African Slave Trade; and for theſe reaſons he could not agree to put that Trade to an end].

No body, he ſaid, admires more than I do myſelf, the principles of juſtice and humanity, but I wiſh to underſtand by theſe terms, a large and a liberal ſyſtem of policy, including the general intereſts of mankind, as far as that is practicable. I have always underſtood, that, of the cardinal virtues, *Charity* was the greateſt, and that the leading principle of that virtue is, "to do unto others as you "would they ſhould do unto you;" a maxim which I will venture to recommend to the enemies of the Slave Trade, when they ſpeak of the Planters and others who are the friends of that Traffick; and I adviſe them alſo to make a diſtinction between the great diſpenſations of Providence, by which the fates of nations are decided, and thoſe incidents which may be called ſecondary cauſes, the latter only being, in ſome meaſure, to be modified by the efforts of Executive Government. But then, I would aſk you how far you will further the meaſure of humanity and juſtice, if you diminiſh the property of the country, which indeed is diminiſhed too much already? You ought to conſider how you may affect contractors, manufacturers, and a vaſt variety of characters connected with this Trade, and by whoſe ruin you will greatly affect the general proſperity of this country. For, by this Trade, there is now produced a revenue of five millions ſterling per annum. Beſides, if ſuch a meaſure as this is to be brought forward at all, it ſhould be at the commencement of a ſeſſion, that there may be time to examine the evidence, and to diſcuſs the whole of it together; for I am apprehenſive that theſe indulgences to the ſanguine hopes of Gentlemen, who expect the Abolition of this Traffick, may lead to immediate miſchief, by preventing the ſupply of the Colonies in many articles which

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are eſſential to their ſecurity. As to the moral improvement of the negroes, which has been mentioned as likely to increaſe their population, I think that there is no one perſon who has any property in that country, who would not co-operate in any ſyſtem which could be proved to have a tendency to moral improvement. In concluſion I would obſerve, that while we remember that theſe poor negroes are men, and have the feelings of men, we ought alſo to remember that the Weſt India Planters, and thoſe concerned in this Traffick, are men alſo, and have the feelings of men; nay, that they have had the ſame education, and have the ſame ſentiments as yourſelves, and know that their intereſt depends on their treating their Slaves with kindneſs, and they have done every thing you deſire of them, and are now doing it, which ſhall appear by papers which ſhall be laid on your table hereafter.

Lord HENRY PETTY.—Unwilling as I am to detain the Houſe at this late hour of the night, yet as I have never had occaſion to deliver an opinion in this Houſe, on this Traffick, I hope it will plead my excuſe for ſoliciting the honour of your attention now, while I deliver all I mean to offer upon it. But firſt, with regard to the courſe of proceeding in this buſineſs. Undoubtedly I agree with my Learned Friend (the SOLICITOR GENERAL) who ſpoke ſo eloquently on the ſubject, that I ſhould, with much more ſatisfaction, give my vote for the direct and immediate Abolition of this Trade, than for any other meaſure; and my Right Honourable Friend who opened this debate, ſtated a ſimilar ſentiment of his own to the Houſe; but diſpaſſionately conſidering the circumſtances in which we ſtand, I agree with him in thinking, that the ſubject before us is of ſuch a nature that, at ſo late a period of the ſeſſion, we ſhould find a difficulty in paſſing a Bill in the courſe of it. Under theſe circumſtances what does my Right Honourable Friend do? He only calls on the Houſe, in the firſt inſtance, after this ſubject has been formally diſcuſſed, and the moſt deliberate conſideration given to it that any queſtion ever had, to be faithful, as far as is now poſſible, to its promiſe, made in the year 1792, that the African Slave Trade ſhould be abolished

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within four years. This the Houſe pledged itſelf to do. That pledge my Right Honourable Friend calls upon you to redeem. It is impoſſible to conceal the ſhame and diſgrace which have attached to this Houſe, on account of the non-performance of its engagements; and, therefore, you ſhould ſhew your readineſs to do all in your power, this year, towards the attainment of that great object, which is only to declare that you remain of the ſame opinion; that you are actuated by the ſame ſentiments and feelings, as when you entered into this pledge; and that, as ſoon as circumſtances will admit, you will take effectual meaſures for the Abolition of the African Slave Trade. That is all which my Right Honourable Friend aſks of this Houſe on the preſent occaſion.

The Noble Lord (CASTLEREAGH) oppoſite to me, has argued, that as this Reſolution is to be ſent to the other Houſe of Parliament, if their opinion, as he apprehended, ſhould be oppoſite to ours, it would be indecorous, as well as fruitleſs, in us, to perſiſt in our Reſolution. I can only ſay that it will be time enough for us to judge of the courſe we ſhall take, when we find that ſuch a difference exiſts. But have we any ground for ſuppoſing that the opinion of the other Houſe of Parliament upon this ſubject will be irreconcilable with ours?—We have no ground for any ſuch ſuppoſition. I think it would be too much to ſuppoſe of any body of men, much leſs to ſuppoſe of their Lordſhips, that they would negative ſuch a Reſolution as this. We certainly cannot infer it from any thing their Lordſhips have hitherto determined on the ſubject of the African Slave Trade; for no queſtion, in the form of this Reſolution, has ever been decided in that Houſe of Parliament. As far as relates to the general principle of this Reſolution, it is new to their Lordſhips. How then can we be juſtified in anticipating their refuſal to concur in it? That the Slave Trade ſhould be in ſome way or other, aboliſhed, is a propoſition to which this Houſe has already agreed, and to which this country, with the exception of a few individuals, has alſo aſſented; nay to which, taken upon its general principle, the Noble Lord himſelf is ready to aſſent; for he aſſures us that he *even abhors*, and deteſts the principle of the traffick.

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With regard to the main queſtion which is now before us, all I wiſh to ſubmit to the Houſe to-night is, the general opinion upon it which I have uniformly entertained, but which I have never before had occaſion to expreſs in this Houſe. And in giving that opinion, I wiſh to be underſtood to go to the full extent of what has been expreſſed, more eloquently, by my Right Honourable, and alſo, by my Learned Friend; that this Trade is contrary to juſtice, to humanity, and to ſound policy, as far as ſound policy can be diſtinguiſhed from juſtice and humanity, if there be any ſuch diſtinction. Sir, that this Trade is, in all its parts, and in its whole hiſtory, founded in injuſtice and cruelty, is an indiſputable propoſition. At its commencement in Africa it is connected with, and is an encouragement (if it be not the cauſe) of a variety of other evils in Africa. Nor are thoſe evils confined to Africa; they adhere to the purchaſe, and accompany the ſyſtem in all its progreſs. It is a ſyſtem which is the parent of fraud and violence, robbery and murder, of falſe accuſation and mockery of juſtice—it is the parent of every vice which can at once degrade and afflict the human race; for, after ſpreading over the coaſt of Africa the devaſtation and havock of warfare, its unhappy victims are doomed to hardſhips and cruelties that are worſe than death. Nor is any thing elſe to be expected, becauſe cruelty begets cruelty. The miſery, however, which they endure, is too ſhocking to think of; and fully to deſcribe, impoſſible. After being ſubjected to all the wretchedneſs of war and devaſtation, torn from their relatives and friends by violence, or procured by fraud, in one part of the world; they are carried through a ſcene of continued horror to perpetual ſlavery in another. Thus, this ſyſtem perpetuates in one part of the globe, the miſery it creates in another. Nor is this all; after having looked with horror at the miſery and deſolation thus created in the firſt inſtance, and the cruelty exerciſed in the ſecond, and having turned from them with diſguſt, we find another evil, of immenſe magnitude to us, following cloſe upon theſe, independent of the common, though deplorable, waſte of African life, which attends every part of this moſt hateful traffick. The loſs of Britiſh ſeamen in this traffick is enormous; for it appears

appears that in the courſe of one voyage, in this Trade, the mortality of the ſeamen employed in it, is equal to one-ſixth of their whole number: ſo that in three voyages, one half of all the Britiſh ſeamen engaged in the Slave Trade are deſtroyed in its purſuit; that is, they become the victims of a ſyſtem which is founded upon fraud, robbery and murder, and which procures to the Britiſh nation nothing but the abhorrence and execration of mankind. Nor have we yet done with the evils which attend this hideous ſyſtem; for it brings in its train the worſt of all moral effects, not only as it reſpects the ſlaves themſelves, who, independently of the many other diſadvantages of their ſtate, certainly witneſs in thoſe who ſubject them to it, the worſt of all poſſible examples; but as it reſpects thoſe who conduct the different parts of this ſyſtem, and whoſe property is embarked in it. I am ſure, Sir, I do not mean to caſt any reflection on the Planters, as diſtinct from other men. I ſhould anticipate the ſame effect with regard to every Member of this Houſe, and with regard to myſelf, if I was concerned in this ſpecies of employment. I do not feel bold enough to ſay, that I or any man who ſhould engage in the Slave Trade, could eſcape the moral degradation which it is calculated to produce; or that with the unlimited powers which planters poſſeſs, we ſhould not yield to the temptations of ſuch a ſituation, and abuſe that power. But when we conſider who are the perſons who adminiſter this ſyſtem, not the Planters themſelves but their ſubſtitutes, often taken from the loweſt claſſes of ſociety, we cannot wonder at the effects which accompany this deteſtable ſyſtem, not only affording to men of bad diſpoſitions full ſcope for their exerciſe, but rendering men, conſtitutionally of good diſpoſitions, callous to the miſery of others; an evil effect inſeparable from a ſyſtem of continued inhumanity.

Theſe are ſome of the conſiderations which preſs upon my feelings with reſpect to this ſubject. They are conſiderations which have determined me, ever ſince I contemplated this ſubject at all, to vote for the Abolition of the Slave Trade, whenever an opportunity ſhould be afforded me. They are conſiderations alſo which determined this Houſe in the year 1792 to adopt a meaſure of

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the ſame kind as the preſent. Has any thing happened ſince to change the opinion of the Houſe of Commons? Quite the contrary; for we have now the cleareſt conviction, founded on the moſt undeniable evidence, that all the arguments then uſed againſt the Abolition were fallacious, being founded not upon truth, but on aſſertions devoid of all truth, and derived from ignorance or prejudice.

An argument in favour of this Trade, if argument it can be called, is founded upon an idea, that the part of the human race who are its ſubjects labour under ſuch a total degradation of mental and moral faculties as nothing can cure; and hence a concluſion is drawn, that nature has doomed them to ſlavery. But I would aſk, Have not the premiſes from which this concluſion is drawn been proved to be falſe, in every inſtance in which an experiment has been made on the Coaſt of Africa? Have they not been proved to be falſe, in every inſtance in which the experiment has been made in the Weſt Indies? Have we not, ourſelves, put them in a ſituation, for which it was confidently aſſerted that their talents were not fit, and have we not experienced the falſehood of that aſſertion? Have we not, ourſelves, made them ſoldiers? Have we not made them Non-commiſſioned Officers? Have we not employed them in every ſervice requiring fidelity and courage, and all the intelligence and virtue which go to conſtitute a good military character? Certainly we have done all theſe things, and they have anſwered the expectation of thoſe who thought the moſt favourably of them. But now, having employed them in ſtations of truſt for *our own* intereſt, and having that intereſt ſerved by it; when we are called upon to acknowledge their capacity with a view to *their own* advantage, ſhall it be ſaid they poſſeſs no ſuch capacity; that they are unfit for truſt and confidence; that Slavery is their doom by nature, and that they are unfit for any other condition? God forbid that we ſhould think ſo. God forbid we ſhould think that they may not be made capable of the enjoyment of liberty, and the exerciſe of free labour, which, for ſome reaſon, I know not what, we chooſe to ſuppoſe them to be totally incapable of by nature, though that ſuppoſition

is falſified by every experiment that has been made, (and they are numerous) both on the Coaſt of Africa and in the Weſt Indies. The argument, therefore, which is derived from the ſuppoſed incapacity of the negroes, to enjoy a rational freedom, is at an end, and can never be repeated in this Houſe with ſucceſs.

The remaining point is, Whether the negro population in the Iſlands can be kept up by natural means, or whether we ſhall be obliged to continue the importation from Africa? Now, Sir, I know that proof is before the Houſe on that ſubject; and certainly every inquiry to which my mind has been directed, in the peruſal of the labours of thoſe who are conſidered to have treated the ſubject of population moſt ably, and more attention has been had to that ſubject of late than at any former period in the hiſtory of the world: every ſuch inquiry teaches me, that where proviſions are abundant, and labour not exceſſive, the natural population of every place will anſwer its demands; in ſhort that nothing can prevent this but unnatural hardſhips. For not only in the bleakeſt parts of Scotland, where many are expoſed to great ſeverities, but in the moſt unwholeſome climates, and in countries where the inhabitants are of the moſt loathſome habits, and in a ſtate, to us, of horrid exiſtence, yet even there, provided there are no artificial hardſhips, the propagation of the ſpecies finds its level, and its inſtinctive impulſe is powerful enough to keep up the population. But there is, in the Weſt Indies, under the preſent ſyſtem, that extreme of miſery which, unfortunately for the intereſt of the planters, prevents the increaſe of population, nay which in ſome caſes almoſt extinguiſhes it. And here I would obſerve that all the arguments of the friends of the Slave Trade, urged fifteen years ago, and, over and over again repeated, though as often refuted, have been now entirely overturned, and that by the practice of ſome of the Colonies themſelves, by which it is demonſtrated, that with good treatment, the population of the Colonies may be abundantly kept up without freſh importation. And this very circumſtance of the partial good produced by tender treatment, has been made uſe of as an argument to ſhew that our interference is unneceſſary. But we have too

ſtrong

ſtrong a proof of the fallacy of that argument; and I wiſh that the Honourable Baronet behind me (Sir W. YOUNG) as well as the Honourable Gentleman oppoſite to me (General GASCOYNE) who appeared offended at the uſe of certain words in this debate, which they ſaid they hoped they ſhould never hear again; ſuch as the words murder, torture, rapine, robbery, and the like;—I wiſh they would reſerve their indignation for thoſe who are guilty of the acts, inſtead of venting it on thoſe who only do their duty in deſcribing them. Are there not accounts of deeds which have been done in the adminiſtration of this ſyſtem, which, if they had been written in letters of blood on the walls of this Houſe, could not be more ſhocking than they are to all human feeling. Elſe why ſhould my Lord SEAFORTH and the ATTORNEY GENERAL of *Barbadoes* call them "murder and torture?" And ſhall we, to accommodate the nerves of Gentlemen, who are friends of the Slave Trade, mollify our ſpeeches in this Houſe, when we are ſpeaking on that ſubject, and deſiſt from calling that "murder and torture" which the Governors of our Weſt India Iſlands, and the ATTORNEY GENERAL of one of them, think they can call by no better names? Shall we, the characteriſtic of whoſe debates is freedom, marked as it often is by boldneſs of expreſſion, and energy of ſtile, ſoften down our language, and ſpeak with tenderneſs and mildneſs of the purchaſe and the ſale of negroes, and of all the enormities to which that degrading traffick gives birth? Sir, I muſt ſay, that if this queſtion were before us merely in the Abſtract, this Reſolution ſhould have my hearty concurrence. But when I conſider how intimately it is connected with the honour and the dignity of this Houſe; when I feel that all the cruelty, and all the perfidy of this hateful ſyſtem, muſt, in a great meaſure, attach to us, by its continuance; I could not refuſe to adopt this meaſure, even if ſerious inconveniencies ſhould ariſe from it to ſome individuals. Of ſuch inconvenience, however, there is no proof, no, not even a well ſupported ſuggeſtion. Sir, I ſupport the Reſolution, knowing it to be the object of my Right Honourable Friend to follow the meaſure up with a view to remove the evil. I ſupport the Reſolution, as evidence to the world of our opinion

upon this ſubject, neceſſary to be avowed, from the courſe which has been taken, and the ſupineneſs which followed the Reſolutions of this Houſe in the year 1792.

The Noble Lord has gone into the queſtion as it relates to the negociation between His Majeſty and foreign powers on the ſubject of co-operation in the object of aboliſhing the African Slave Trade. The Noble Lord tells us we are *not* to invite foreign powers into this negociation, becauſe the Chiefs of thoſe governments, and particularly the Chief of the government of France, may treat the matter with ridicule. I am as little deſirous as any one can be, of holding out any very ſanguine hopes of the co-operation of the Chief of the French government, with this country, in any political meaſure, and I am alſo, as little diſpoſed as any one can be to treating his character with vulgar abuſe. But it is too much to expect from me that I ſhould bow ſo low to the opinion, or the ſuppoſed opinion of the Chief of the government of France, as not to propoſe to that country, or to any other country in Europe, what I think to be right. It is for them afterwards to conſider whether it is worthy of their attention or not. I do, therefore, hope, that, undeterred by any oppoſition; unaffected by any ridicule; and uninfluenced by any intereſt; we ſhall proceed to the adoption of every practicable meaſure for the removal of this great evil and national diſgrace; —that we ſhall not ſuffer ourſelves to be drawn either to the right or to the left, but advance ſtrait forward to the accompliſhment of the moſt magnanimous act of juſtice that ever was atchieved by any legiſlature in the world.

Mr. Rose.—With the opinion which I entertain on this ſubject, and feeling it impoſſible to agree with much of what the Houſe has juſt heard, I think it incumbent on me to deliver that opinion ſhortly, and to ſtate at the ſame time, that I think this Reſolution is brought forward at a time, under circumſtances, and in terms, utterly unfit and improper. From the firſt moment the ſubject was mentioned in this Houſe, I have been inclined to the Abolition of the Slave Trade, in a manner which appeared to me to be juſt and proper, or *indeed* practicable. Yet I have always been under the neceſſity

neceſſity of oppoſing it, in the ſhape in which it has, hitherto, been preſented to this Houſe. The Gentlemen on the other ſide will do me the juſtice to ſay, that early after the firſt propoſal for the Abolition of the Slave Trade, I ſtated to them, diſtinctly, my opinion, that in the way they propoſed it, they would not ſucceed. The mode which I propoſed for that purpoſe, they treated with levity, which I do not blame them for; for whether my plan would have ſucceeded better, I do not know. I certainly propoſed a progreſſive duty, as the Noble Lord near me has done this day—a progreſſive duty, beginning moderately, and gradually riſing for ten or twelve years, until it ſhould become an abſolutely prohibitory duty, which duty ſhould not be reſerved for the revenue, but given as a bounty to the Planters and to the parents of the children, whenever a given number of children had been produced and reared to the age of four or five years, together with an annuity to the parents for life, provided they ſhould have reared a given number of children to a given age, or provided the mortality in their family ſhould be under a given rate. Whether this plan be practicable or not, I do not know, but I only mention it now for the purpoſe of reminding Gentlemen that I was diſpoſed to ſtate to them the plan to which I ſhould have aſſented for the Abolition of the Slave Trade.

A Learned Gentleman treated with ridicule what has been ſaid on the ſubject as it relates to the feelings of the Planters, as if they had no feeling, becauſe they continue to carry on this Trade, notwithſtanding all that has been ſaid againſt it. But I think that they have not had fair play: they have been inſulted, and goaded in this buſineſs: whereas if you had but treated them fairly, they would not have thwarted you in the manner they have done. They had a right to know whether you will have an Abolition or not; but you kept them in a ſtate of ſuſpence for ſixteen or eighteen years. If other experiments had been tried they might have failed, but I think they were leſs likely to fail than the meaſures which have been ſo frequently propoſed to Parliament, and which have hitherto, produced nothing: and I own I ſhould have liked to have ſeen the plan I have mentioned attempted to be put

in practice. But the honourable and Learned Gentleman (the SOLICITOR GENERAL) has ſaid, and conſiderable applauſe has attended his aſſertion, that the African Slave Trade is carried on by rapine, robbery, and murder. I think that the habits of his profeſſion ſhould have led him to be a little more cautious in his expreſſions. Gentlemen of his profeſſion are accuſtomed to look not only at every word, but alſo at every ſyllable which is given in evidence in every cauſe which they have to argue. Upon that evidence, taking the whole of it, and I have gone through the whole of it, I do proteſt, that I do not ſee how that deſcription of the Trade can be ſupported. I do not wiſh the Houſe to form an opinion haſtily, for there certainly is much evidence one way, and much evidence the other way; ſo that to ſay who really ſpoke the truth, and who did not, is a point on which I never could make up my mind compleatly. Among many other facts, related in that evidence, is a ſtory of a ſlave-ſhip which got to leeward of the iſlands, and met a man of war, and the Captain ſaid that he had made a number of the ſlaves walk the plank, that is, had made them walk overboard into the ſea, on account of the want of water or proviſions; a thing which one can not hear of, without horror. I afterwards had an interview with that Captain, and he told me there was not a ſyllable of truth in it. At the ſame time, I believe there may be many practices which are improper, and ought not to be continued, but I only deſire on the other hand, that when Gentlemen comment on theſe topics, they will ſpeak of them cooly—that they will not allow themſelves to be carried away by heat and popular prejudice.

My objection, Sir, to the meaſure now before us is, that it is brought forward in a ſhape which makes it extremely difficult to ſay how it ſhould be dealt with. I cannot vote againſt it, becauſe it profeſſes that the ſubject ſhall be duly conſidered, and to that it is impoſſible to object. But then it is worded in ſo vague and indefinite a manner, that I do not know what to make of it. We are now called upon to agree to ſend up to the other Houſe of Parliament a propoſition, and to call on the Lords to commit themſelves to it, although they may, afterwards,

afterwards, have to hear evidence, and then to govern themſelves according to that evidence. This is putting their Lordſhips in a ſituation, in which I think they ought not to be placed.

But I wiſh to know, Sir, how it is propoſed to provide for the intereſts of thoſe who have cultivated their land in the Weſt Indies under the faith of Acts of Parliament, for a century and an half, and who, during all that time, have not only been cultivating the land which they had originally, but have alſo been encouraged to purchaſe freſh lands, and whoſe property may be deſtroyed by the Abolition.

But now we come to a greater queſtion than that of the Abolition itſelf, ſuppoſing it to be accompliſhed, I mean the danger of its leading to the emancipation of the Slaves in the Weſt Indies; becauſe what the Noble Lord, who ſpoke laſt, ſaid on that ſubject, tends to that iſſue. The Noble Lord talks of the advantages of free labour: what is that but pointing to emancipation? I know that this has been diſclaimed by many Gentlemen in this Houſe, who expreſsly declare that they mean no ſuch thing; but the Noble Lord talks of free labour: what does that mean but emancipation? Do you think that the negroes will be in better order after emancipation, than they are at preſent? I can only ſay, I think that no man living, who looks at the matter without prejudice, can be of opinion that the negroes will be in a better ſtate after emancipation than they are at preſent, nor do I think it will make them more faithful to their employers. Arms have been put into the hands of the negroes in the Iſland of Dominica, where I have conſiderable property. That Iſland was three times attacked by the enemy, and it became neceſſary to defend it with all the force it poſſeſſed. For that purpoſe arms were put into the hands of the negroes, and though thoſe who were thus armed had many opportunities to deſert, yet not a ſingle negro went away; every man of them took up arms, and exerted himſelf with as much energy and vigour, as any of us would do in caſe this country were attacked. And here I cannot help digreſſing to ſay that I wonder my Right Honourable Friend (Mr. WINDHAM) ſhould think of ſending ſo many ſoldiers to theſe Iſlands,

Iſlands, to a climate which does not ſuit them at all, when it would be ſo beneficial to hire the negroes as ſoldiers.

The Right Honourable Gentleman who opened this debate profeſſed reſpect for the memory of a perſon whoſe memory is very dear to me (Mr. PITT). It was my misfortune to differ from him on this point, and I can ſay with the Noble Lord near me (Lord CASTLEREAGH) it is the only point in which I ever had the misfortune to differ from him, except one, and that was at an early period of his life, I mean the ſubject of Reform in Parliament. I was ſorry for this difference, becauſe I thought it might endanger ſome ſuſpicion of a want of ſincerity on the part of my Right Honourable Friend, when two perſons continued in the ſame Adminiſtration, who thought ſo very differently on two ſuch important ſubjects as a Reform in Parliament, and the Abolition of the Slave Trade; and I was twice about to retire from my ſituation, but, on his entreaty, I retained it. But with all the deference I have for the judgment of my late Right Honourable Friend, the opinion I have taken up on this ſubject will, I believe, die with me. I am perfectly ready to go into any inquiry which may be thought neceſſary upon that matter, and to give my reaſons for my opinion, and to ſtate the plan which, according to that opinion, will be moſt effectual, without violence, for the Abolition of the Slave Trade. But if the Abolition is to take place by force and at once, inſtead of the gradual plan which we have recommended, I am afraid it will be the occaſion of an infinite quantity of blood being ſpilt. I hope I am not influenced by any improper motive, but I think I may ſay that Weſt India property has a claim on the public, and ſhould be protected by Parliament.

The Noble Lord who ſpoke laſt, has not, I am ſure, informed himſelf upon this ſubject, as it was his duty to do or he would not now have ſpoken as he did. He ſpoke of the period of the middle paſſage as a period of miſery; now one half of the evidence ſhews it to be very different. I conſider that the poor people who are taken from their country, ſhould be treated with all kindneſs and humanity, and I believe they are ſo, for it is the intereſt of the party who has the care of them, that they ſhould be ſo treated,

there

there being a premium to them, in caſe the mortality in the paſſage ſhould be under a given proportion of the number which they have on board.

I have only one obſervation more to make, and that is with reſpect to a narrative which I have read in a pamphlet,* reſpecting the cruel treatment of the negroes. I do aſſure the Noble Lord, he never read any thing on this ſubject with more horror or ſtronger feelings of compaſſion, than I did that ſtatement. I think the facts there ſtated, are a diſgrace not only to the Britiſh Colonies, but to human kind. That there ſhould be a Colony in which death ſhould not be the puniſhment for murder, and in which they ſhould refuſe to make a law to remedy that defect, as they have done in ſome of the Colonies is what we ſhould not endure; I would ſay to them, "Take your "choice, either paſs the law, and take means duly to "execute it, or you ſhall no longer be a Colony of Great "Britain; you ſhall not belong to us." So much for that part of the ſubject. But as to the reſt of it, I think you ſhould lay down a reaſonable plan for the gradual reduction of the African importation, as the population ſhall increaſe in the Colonies, and recommend that plan to the adoption of the Colonies; for I do not believe you can effect it without their concurrence. I do not mean to ſay you have no right, for you have a clear right to do what you pleaſe with them: you have a right to tax the produce of the Colonies for Colonial purpoſes; you have a right to make what regulations you pleaſe in their affairs: but unleſs you have the Colonies with you, you never will do any thing effectual; for when you are legiſlating for the Colonies internally, you have no poſſible means to inforce the meaſures which you adopt. The Reſolution now before the Houſe, ſhall have no oppoſition from me, for, worded as it is, I think it is impoſſible to oppoſe it. When you have a meaſure before you, to which the Colonies will conſent, I ſhall gladly concur in it, for then it will be effectual; but otherwiſe it never will be ſo.

* Horrors of Negro Slavery, printed for Hatchard, Piccadilly.

Lord

Lord HENRY PETTY.—The Right Honourable Gentleman who has juſt ſat down, in referring to what I ſaid, has miſunderſtood me. He ſays that I ſpoke of free labour, and from thence not only drew a concluſion in favour of the Abolition of the Slave Trade. But alſo for the emancipation of the negroes. Now, Sir, if he means that I am of opinion that the *immediate* Abolition of the Slave Trade ſhould be accompanied by a *proclamation granting immediate freedom to the ſlaves in the Weſt Indies*, I can aſſure him that I have no ſuch wild, irrational, or impracticable idea. But if he means that I look to the Abolition of the Slave Trade as likely ultimately to produce emancipation; I certainly do conceive it poſſible, by amending the ſituation of the ſlaves, and by the progreſſive improvement of their minds, moral character, and habits, as far as they are capable of improvement in ſuch a ſtate, that they ſhould paſs from ſlavery to free labour, as they become fit for it. In that ſenſe, and in that ſenſe only, I look for the emancipation of the negroes.

Mr. WILBERFORCE.—One fact has been ſtated by my Right Honourable Friend (Mr. ROSE) as having been miſrepreſented in the evidence, I mean the making a number of negroes "walk the plank," as it is called. He ſays there is no foundation for that ſtory, and that he was ſo aſſured by the officer who is ſaid to have related it. Now, Sir, I poſitively declare, that the fact, as he has mentioned it, is not to be found in any of the evidence which was laid before this Houſe. It is a fact which came out in the year 1783, at Guildhall, in the Court of King's Bench, in conſequence of a ſuit between the owners of a ſlave ſhip and the under-writers, upon a policy of inſurance on the ſlaves on board, during the voyage from Africa to the Weſt Indies. The owners of the veſſel and cargo, brought an action againſt the under-writers for the amount of the value of a number of ſlaves ſaid to have been loſt, and it was fully proved on the trial, that theſe ſlaves were not loſt by capture, or by the operation of the winds and waves, which are called "perils of the ſea," and againſt which the under-writers inſured the owners by the policy; but that they were *thrown* overboard to the number

number of about one hundred and thirty. I do not know where it is that the account of this occurrence is correctly detailed; it certainly is not in the evidence given to this Houſe, on the ſubject of the Slave Trade. If my Right Honourable Friend had read the evidence which was given us upon this ſubject, with the care he beſtows on other matters, he would not have repreſented this ſtory as a part of that evidence which had been refuted.

Mr. BARHAM.—My Right Honourable Friend (Mr. Fox) whoſe conduct in this buſineſs has done him ſo much honour, has not ſaid any thing againſt granting compenſation to thoſe who may ſuffer by the Abolition. If we agree to that Abolition, I think we take it upon ourſelves that no loſs ſhall be occaſioned to any one, without a compenſation. I think you ought to ſay, that wherever compenſation can be made, it ſhall be made. I think you ought not to examine whether that compenſation ſhould be great or ſmall, but whether the claim to it be juſt, and being ſatisfied of that, I think that compenſation ought to go hand in hand with the Abolition; otherwiſe I will venture to ſay, that no plan for the Abolition of the African Slave Trade will ſucceed. The honour of the Houſe is concerned in the adoption of ſuch a meaſure. I believe however that the amount of that compenſation will be much leſs than has been generally apprehended. Yet until compenſation be provided for, I cannot approve of any thing that has been or may be propoſed for the Abolition of this Traffick.

As to the ſlaves obtaining the condition of free labourers; I am not one of thoſe who deprecate the Abolition of the Slave Trade, on a proſpect of any evils ariſing from that condition of free labour, which may be the reſult of it. That however, is a ſtate of things not to be brought forward by any Act of Parliament here, but preparation muſt be made for it by rendering the Slaves fit for freedom, and that muſt be accompliſhed gradually, by granting to them, from time to time, as much freedom as they can bear, until they ſhall all become fit for it; but they ſhould not have it ſooner. And when that great work is accompliſhed, it will not only redound to the honour of this

country, but it will alſo be greatly to the advantage of this country, in the dry calculation of Pounds, Shillings, and Pence; and that advantage will be in proportion to the extent of the improvement. I, as an individual, have tried to bring about an improvement of that kind among ſome of my own negroes, but in their preſent ſtate I do not think they can be prevailed upon to work for money. A negroe does not underſtand any condition, but that of Maſter and Slave. He has ſo few wants that nothing you can offer him in the way of money, will be regarded as an equivalent for his labour, when he has his choice between labour and reſt. With him there is no privilege equal to that of being free from labour; for that reaſon a negroe is hardly ever induced to work as a free labourer: he has ſo few wants that money is no temptation to him. That he will be a ſoldier is true, becauſe that is not inconſiſtent with his averſion from labour. He has no wants which the extra labour of a week will not furniſh funds to ſupply for almoſt a year; and therefore he has no inducement to labour for hire. Happening to poſſeſs eſtates in different parts of the Iſlands, I can venture to affirm that, for forty or fifty years paſt, no means have been left untried, which imagination could deviſe or labour execute, to counteract the evils which neceſſarily attend the ſyſtem of ſlavery; but they have been without any thing like the deſired effect; ſo that it remains for my Right Honourable Friend to accompliſh the object with the aſſiſtance of other Members of this Houſe. The negroe ſhould be made fond of free labour by degrees, which he is not at preſent. If that ſyſtem ſhould be ſubmitted to by them, it will do; but if not, and the ſyſtem ſhould be attempted to be altered by force, ſuch interference would be reſiſted. But this I muſt add, that to put an end to all ſlavery in the Iſlands immediately is impoſſible.

Sir JOHN NEWPORT.—I do not riſe at this late hour of the night to detain you long, but on account of ſome expreſſions uſed in the courſe of this debate, I think it is, in ſome degree, neceſſary, not only for judgment to be pronounced on this motion, but that it ſhould not appear

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to be confined to one branch of the Empire; for I can aſſure this Houſe that whatever difference of opinion may ſubſiſt in this part of the United Kingdom, on the queſtion now before us, in that part of it to which I have the honour to belong there is but one univerſal ſentiment of abhorrence of the African Slave Trade, and an ardent deſire to wipe off, as ſpeedily as poſſible, the ſtain it has caſt upon the character of the Britiſh nation. And ſo decided are they there in aſſerting that principle, that very lately, when efforts were moſt ſtrenuouſly made by certain perſons connected with the commerce of Liverpool, to create differences of ſentiment reſpecting the Slave Trade, in that part of the United Kingdom, theſe efforts received no countenance: on the contrary, they were univerſally reprobated and received with an abſolute and decided negative. It was urged that they were likely to derive material benefit in that part of the United Kingdom, by the ſupport which the African Slave Trade was alledged to give to Weſt India commerce, which would ſuſtain much injury by its abolition. The intereſt, therefore, which they had in reſiſting the Abolition of this Traffick, was ſtated to them with great addreſs. Their anſwer was, "WE WILL HAVE NO SHARE IN A TRAFFICK CONSISTING IN RAPINE, BLOOD, AND MURDER."

That was the reception which the advocates of the Slave Trade met with at Waterford, and it would have been the ſame in every part of Ireland, had they choſen to make the experiment. The Iriſh have too deep a ſenſe of the bleſſings of a free conſtitution, and of what they owe to the memory of their anceſtors, and what they alſo owe to themſelves, to purchaſe commerce by the ſacrifice of character, by infamy, and by ſpilling blood.

It has been propoſed as a more expedient mode of aboliſhing this Trade, than that which is now propoſed, to lay a duty which ſhall increaſe progreſſively, until it amount to a prohibitory duty, on the importation of ſlaves into the Weſt Indies, and to apply that duty in a line of bounty on propagation: and yet it is maintained by the ſame perſons that an abſolute prohibition cannot take effect. But how are you to effect your object by duty, if it be true that the duty may be evaded by contraband

trade, and thus become a premium on ſmuggling, which you ſay, cannot be prevented? Now, from the nature of things, it muſt be more difficult at leaſt, to prevent the importation by duty, than by an abſolute prohibition, becauſe it is eaſier to land ſlaves without paying the duty for them, when ſlave ſhips are permitted to approach the ſhore and enter the harbours, and when landing is permitted upon that payment, than when that approach and that landing are prohibited altogether. In the one caſe you muſt keep an unremitting watch along the whole coaſt of the Iſlands, in order to prevent the landing, becauſe there being a right to land upon payment of the duty, you cannot ſay, before-hand, that the duty will not be paid; you muſt wait until the landing is attempted. Beſides, they will have a right to go from one place to another, until they find a fair opportunity for landing. Under an abſolute prohibition, however, you can ſeize the Ship and Cargo at firſt ſight. Therefore it muſt be obvious to the Houſe, that a ſyſtem of duty upon importation, muſt be very inefficient, compared with that of prohibition, if it be your object, as you profeſs it is, really to put an end to the importation of Slaves into the Weſt Indies. I ſhould treſpaſs on the Houſe too much if I were to urge all I have to ſubmit upon this ſubject, but that has been rendered unneceſſary by the ample manner in which it has been diſcuſſed by others. I ſhall, therefore, for the preſent, content myſelf with giving my hearty concurrence to this motion.

Mr. CANNING.— I ſhall not trouble the Houſe at much length in delivering my ſentiments on this motion; nor ſhould I have troubled you at all, but for one expreſſion in the ſpeech of the Honourable Baronet, who has juſt ſat down, an expreſſion harmleſs in itſelf, but which might poſſibly convey an idea that objections were taken to this meaſure on this ſide of the Houſe, in ſome other ſenſe than that of fair individual feeling. I do not think it neceſſary to ſtate the grounds ſo often ſtated, on which I concur not only in this Reſolution, but on which I ſhould concur in almoſt any poſſible form of words in which the ſentiment conveyed by that Reſolution, could

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be expreſſed. But there appears to me to be an objection in limine to the mode of proceeding as now propoſed. I think that having the ſubject before us, we ſhould diſpoſe of it in a ſubſtantial manner. I cannot conceive a reaſon why, if it be neceſſary to introduce this queſtion at all, (and I think it is fit to introduce it) and any meaſure is propoſed in which this Houſe is perſuaded to concur, and the other Houſe of Parliament is alſo called upon to concur, I do not ſee why ſuch a meaſure ſhould not take immediate and ſubſtantial effect. Of all the arguments which have been urged ever ſince I had the honour of a ſeat in this Houſe, that which has always weighed moſt with me, and made me, I will not ſay heſitate; for nothing could make me heſitate as to the demerits of this traffick; but heſitate reſpecting the propriety of agitating this queſtion, was this, that it did become us to conſider the probable effect of the Abolition of this Trade, and the miſchief which might poſſibly be done by agitating the queſtion without its leading to Abolition: and in my opinion the leaſt practical good, and the greateſt poſſible miſchief are likely to be the reſult of a meaſure taken in Parliament without following up that meaſure in practice. The reaſons which are given for bringing forward this meaſure now, are not ſatisfactory to my mind.

[Here the Right Honourable Gentleman made a number of reflections calculated to ſhew that Miniſters had been culpably remiſs in not having brought this queſtion forward earlier in the ſeſſion, when buſineſs was not ſo preſſing, and maintained that as all the Members of the Executive government were agreed upon it, it would have been better to have brought it on in a mature ſtate, by way of Bill, inſtead of a Reſolution of this kind, in which although the whole Houſe might now concur, yet it afforded no ſecurity whatever for a future concurrence in the meaſure of Abolition. He inſinuated that the plan which had been purſued manifeſted no ſincere purpoſe to aboliſh the Trade, but was probably intended to ſerve the political end of obtaining the parliamentary ſupport of the zealous friends of the meaſure. As for the Reſolution he conſidered it as doing nothing more than holding out falſe hopes to the public upon this important matter. He

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thought the preſent Reſolution leſs definite than that which paſſed in the year 1792, and thought it defective on that account. He ſaid he ſhould have more ſatisfaction in voting for a much more effectual meaſure than this, for the Abolition of the Slave Trade, and although the apparent good of the preſent meaſure did not appear to him to be equal to the poſſible miſchief, yet ſo great an hatred had he to the African Slave Trade, that he ſhould vote for it.]

Mr. MANNING.—I confeſs I have heard nothing in the courſe of this debate, that has changed my opinion as to the expediency of this Reſolution, and I ſubmit to the good ſenſe of this Houſe the propriety of deferring a meaſure of this magnitude and importance until the next ſeſſion of Parliament. I am of opinion that the frequent agitation of this ſubject, in this Houſe, is highly injurious to our valuable poſſeſſions in the Weſt Indies, and that the preſent debate might therefore well have been ſpared; for in my opinion nothing can be effectually done without the concurrence of the aſſemblies of the Iſlands.

An expreſſion made uſe of in the courſe of this debate, by an Honourable and Learned Gentleman (the SOLICITOR GENERAL) appears to me very alarming. He aſked, "Shall "the debts of England be paid by the blood of the Inhabi- "tants of Africa?" That expreſſion is an alarming one, as it appears to me, nor is it, as I conceive, a correct mode of ſpeaking of the African Traffick; for different Acts of Parliament, which I will not detain the Houſe with moving to have read, have encouraged the African Slave Trade. The preamble of one of which runs thus—"Whereas the "Trade to Africa is highly beneficial" [Hear! Hear! from Mr. FULLER]. I ſay this is an encouragement to go into the Trade, which makes it bona fide Britiſh. If therefore you have changed your opinion of this Trade, no matter from what cauſe, I ſay you are bound in the firſt inſtance, to give a pledge to all the Planters of the Colonies, that in all caſes made out fairly, you will grant compenſation. I ſhould have been ſatisfied had the Right *Honourable* Secretary of State ſtated thus much; I truſt

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that in the next ſeſſion of Parliament you will give that pledge, without which I do not ſee the ſmalleſt chance of your intention being carried into effect.

There was a part of the ſpeech of the Noble Lord (Lord HENRY PETTY) which, as it ſtood originally, wanted explanation on the ſubject of the emancipation of the negroes, but which he has fairly explained in a way which, I think, ought to be ſatisfactory to every Gentleman's mind; for he looks towards the emancipation of the negroes in the Weſt Indies, at no given or definite period, but as an event to take place when they ſhall be fit to receive it, when they ſhall be in that ſtate of moral improvement which my Honourable Friend (Mr. WILBERFORCE) ſtated; and with that explanation of the matter we ought all to be ſatisfied.

My Honourable Friend (Mr. WILBERFORCE) alluded to the vote of 1792, when the diviſion in this Houſe was 300 to 82, and he ſeems to think there is no reaſon for this Houſe coming to a different Reſolution at the preſent moment. But, Sir, has nothing happened in the interim which ſhould induce Gentlemen in this Houſe to pauſe at this meaſure? Do they forget the ſtate of St. Domingo? Do they forget that this Traffick produces ſix millions ſterling of revenue? Let them look at the ſtate of St. Domingo. I do hope that every Gentleman who has a vote to give upon this ſubject, will turn it in his mind a great deal before he gives that vote. I hope that this Houſe will not come to any concluſion on this ſubject, without weighing all the probable conſequences of that concluſion; and I am perfectly perſuaded with the Right Honourable Gentleman (Mr. ROSE) that without the concurrence of the Planters in the Iſlands, who have the means either of enforcing, or thwarting your wiſhes, you will never effect your object.

Mr. WILLIAM SMITH.—I ſhall not take up the time of the Houſe long; but I muſt commence with ſaying, that although I ſat on this ſide (the oppoſition ſide) of the Houſe for many years, during the time that the Slave Trade has been agitated, from the firſt time of its being brought forward by my Honourable Friend (Mr. WILBERFORCE)

WILBERFORCE) and ſupported by a late Right Honourable Gentleman (Mr. PITT), I do not know a ſingle propoſition to that purpoſe which was not ſupported moſt ſtrenuouſly by the Right Honourable Gentleman who ſpoke laſt but one (Mr. CANNING); and yet now, for the firſt time, ever ſince he became a Member of this Houſe, he thinks the meaſure unſeaſonable. I take it for granted that no feeling of any other nature than that of a ſenſe of his public duty can be ſuppoſed to mix in his mind with that eager zeal which he has manifeſted on this occaſion; or to lead him to repreſent matters as if with a view to create diviſion among thoſe whom he oppoſes: but that was what he certainly could not mean, although it had that appearance. So much for the ſpeech of the Right Honourable Gentleman. On other points I ſhall ſay but a few words, which are rendered neceſſary by what was ſtated by the Honourable Member who laſt ſat down. I do hope, Sir, that after this night, we ſhall hear no more of that ſilly calumny, that we are aiming at the immediate emancipation of the Slaves in the Weſt Indies, which for the laſt eighteen years has been regularly faſtened upon us, every time the Abolition of the Slave Trade has been propoſed, and as repeatedly denied by us; but which with an inflexible unfairneſs (not to call it by any other name) has ſtill continued to be imputed to us. It has been repeatedly ſtated by us, that the emancipation of the negroes in the Weſt Indies, makes no part of the object we have in view in the Abolition of the African Slave Trade, in any other ſenſe than that which has been ſo well explained by the Noble Lord (HENRY PETTY) and another Gentleman, whom I am happy to call my friend; and I do hope that we ſhall eſcape the repetition of that calumny.

An Honourable Friend of mine has complained of the miſrepreſentations which at various times have been made of the conduct of the Planters. I am aware my Honourable Friend will acquit us all of any intention to confound all the Planters together in one common charge of miſconduct; ſo far from it, that I am happy to ſay, what I am really convinced of, that there are among the Planters in *the* Weſt Indies, many who do, moſt ſincerely, wiſh for

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the Abolition of the African Slave Trade in the way which they think beſt adapted for the purpoſe, reſpecting which, however, they may poſſibly labour under ſome prejudices which may have prevented them from taking the beſt view of the ſubject. But the charges againſt the Planters in ſome of the Iſlands, as far as they are true, are, of courſe, not to be refuted by the ſpeeches of Members of this Houſe. They depend upon the acts of the Planters themſelves, which can never be altered either by aſſertion or by argument. One charge is ſpecifically this; that the Planters of Barbadoes refuſed to declare the killing of a negroe murder. Is it not therefore impoſſible that the character of the Planters ſhould be acquitted in this inſtance?

Sir, it is only by due attention to the domeſtic comfort, and above all, to the moral conduct of the negroes, that their population can be kept up; and to ſhew this to be the opinion of the beſt informed, I ſhall quote the words of their own Acts.

One of the clauſes of an Act paſſed in Dominica in the year 1788, (and Acts ſimilar to this have paſſed in ſome of the other Iſlands), runs thus: "*Whereas a knowledge of the doctrines, and a due attention to the exerciſe of the duties of the Chriſtian religion, would tend to improve the morals and advance the temporal and eternal happineſs of the Slaves;* it is enacted, that all Owners, Overſeers, &c. ſhall, on every Sunday on their ſeveral plantations, convene together the Slaves for the purpoſe of performing divine worſhip, and *ſhall not fail to exhort* all unbaptized Slaves to receive the holy ſacrament of Baptiſm; and all the unbaptized Children of Slaves ſhall receive the ſaid ſacrament: and *on neglect of theſe duties* the Owners, &c. ſhall be fined in not leſs than £10. nor more than £25. And all Owners, &c. ſhall *encourage and exhort all Slaves*, arrived at years of maturity, and deſirous of entering into a connubial ſtate, *to receive the ceremony of Chriſtian marriage, and in neglect of doing ſo ſhall be ſubject to a fine of £5.*"

When we come however to enquire into the good effects which this ſalutary enactment has produced, we find that it has been wholly neglected in practice; I ſuppoſe becauſe it was "only conſidered," to uſe Governor

Prevoſt's words, "as a political meaſure to avert the interference of the mother country in the management of ſlaves." The Rev. John Audain, Rector of St. George's, in Dominica, ſtates in a letter to Governor Prevoſt, that he can furniſh no returns of marriages in conſequence of this act, becauſe, he ſays, "a very few even of the free-coloured people marry, and *not one ſlave*, ſince I have been here. Why they do not I readily conceive, particularly the ſlaves. Their owners *do not exhort them to it*, and they ſhew no diſpoſition themſelves to alter that mode of cohabitation which they have been accuſtomed to."

From theſe extracts it appears, that unleſs the Planters themſelves, attend to this object, much more than has hitherto been done for them by their agents, the negroe population of the Iſlands, will never be kept up; for we find, moſt clearly, that no ſuch attention is generally paid, notwithſtanding the importance of the object to be effected by it.

Gentlemen, Sir, have taken exception to the epithets of the Honourable and Learned Gentleman (the SOLICITOR GENERAL), who deſcribed the African Slave Trade to be "a ſyſtem of rapine, robbery and murder," and particularly to what was ſaid reſpecting the paſſage of theſe unhappy victims to the Weſt Indies. I ſee no reaſon whatever why the Learned Gentleman ſhould recal any of theſe epithets, for they are moſt appropriate to the ſyſtem deſcribed by them, and while we continue to commit the depredations which are committed, that is, while we continue to carry on the African Slave Trade, which is a ſyſtem of depredation altogether, ſo long will theſe epithets be applied with juſtice to that ſyſtem: indeed no other epithets ought to be applied, becauſe no other epithets can adequately deſcribe its enormity. Sir, if any authority were wanted to ſupport this aſſertion; it would be very eaſy to produce it, by recurring to the evidence. I will venture to ſay that the evidence we have before us, of the cruelties of this traffick, amply juſtifies every one of theſe epithets. Nor is that all, for we can refer to the teſtimony given of this Trade, by a perſon who cannot be ſuppoſed to be prejudiced in favour of the Abolition of it; *for he* oppoſed that meaſure in this Houſe; I mean the

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late Mr. BRYAN EDWARDS, who declared, not in this Houſe but in the Aſſembly of Jamaica, in a ſpeech which was afterwards printed by him, that it was a ſyſtem of rapine, robbery, and murder, and that to maintain a contrary propoſition, was mockery and inſult. Of the ſincerity of this declaration, it is impoſſible for any one who knew that Gentleman, to entertain a doubt; therefore, as to that part of this traffick which relates to the Coaſt of Africa, it is, moſt indiſputably, a ſyſtem of rapine, robbery, and murder. If any one ſhould be diſpoſed, after all, to doubt this; let him read the account given of this Traffick by a private individual (Mungo Parke), unconnected with any of the friends of the Abolition. He will there find one uniform concurring teſtimony to the ſame effect; a teſtimony which, I do affirm, cannot fail to carry conviction into the mind of every human being who is not bent on ſhutting out the light of his own underſtanding upon this ſubject. So that with reſpect to the expreſſions of the Honourable and Learned Gentleman, which made ſuch an impreſſion upon the Houſe, "that the debts of the people of England, were not to be paid by the blood of the people of Africa," I do maintain that they were perfectly correct. I do aver, that if the people of England are in debt to the dealers in ſlaves, they are paying that debt with the blood of the people of Africa. I do aver, that any Gentleman may convince himſelf of the truth of this aſſertion from indiſputable evidence. I do maintain, that if any perſon peruſes that evidence with the attention it merits, it will be impoſſible for him to reſiſt that conviction.

But it is urged, that as this ſubject has been fourteen years before Parliament, and nothing has been done in it, Parliament muſt be perſuaded, although it has never ſaid ſo, that it is impoſſible to aboliſh this Traffick. No concluſion can be more unjuſt. An Honourable Gentleman aſks, "What has taken place ſince that time up to the preſent moment?"—Do we want to know what has taken place in that period? Have we ever had a period ſo eventful in our hiſtory, or in the hiſtory of Europe, as that of the laſt fourteen years?—Did not our conteſt with France take up the whole or very nearly the whole of that

that period?—Do we not know to what a degree the attention of the late Right Honourable Gentleman (Mr. PITT), whoſe ſpeeches upon this Trade, will do honour to his memory whenever his name is mentioned, was engaged for the whole of that period; a circumſtance which muſt plead his excuſe, if at one part of that time, he appeared leſs earneſt upon this ſubject, than another? But we ought to remember that this Houſe has not been altogether negligent of its pledge. A Bill paſſed this Houſe for the total Abolition two years ago, and was ſent to the Lords; but at too late a period of the ſeſſion to admit of its being maturely conſidered by them.

The Honourable Gentleman who ſpoke lately, aſks, "Whether or not this Trade had been ſanctioned by Act "of Parliament?" Is it really poſſible that any Gentleman can, with the common ideas of a legiſlator, aſk that queſtion in this Houſe, with a view of offering it as an impediment to the Abolition of the Slave Trade? Are we, after ſuch a full and ample diſcuſſion as this ſubject has undergone; after we have ſolemnly declared, "that the "Slave Trade is contrary to juſtice and humanity," to be gravely told that we cannot aboliſh it, becauſe it was ſanctioned in the time of ELIZABETH, and has been continued to the diſgrace of this country, the infinite diſgrace of this country, up to the preſent day? Is the length of time which this traffick has been allowed to ſubſiſt, capable of being uſed for any thing but our own reproach?

An Honourable Gentleman, who ſpoke ſome time ago, I mean the Member for Liverpool, dwelt largely on the trade of that town, and he ſeemed to think not only that the town of Liverpool, but the country at large, would be materially injured, if this Trade ſhould be aboliſhed; and that he was giving us a good reaſon why the Slave Trade ſhould not be done away, becauſe, forſooth, a very important town in His Majeſty's dominions was deriving great emolument from this traffick. With reſpect to the town of Liverpool, however it may derive benefit from the Slave Trade; I ſpeak it without fear of contradiction, for I have friends in that town on whoſe information I can rely; I believe that the Slave Trade is a very inſignificant part of its commerce. They are moſt reſpectable

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merchants in point of opulence and extent of dealing, from whom I derive my authority in this particular, and they have no connection whatever with the Slave Trade, but do as much reprobate that Trade, as any other perſons in His Majeſty's dominions. The more reſpectable merchants of Liverpool deteſt the Slave Trade as much as the nation at large deteſt it. Sir, I have long thought, that whether this Trade be aboliſhed by law or not, it cannot long exiſt; for a great many parts of this country are actually tired of the load of guilt which attends it. It is, at preſent, only carried on in the ports of London, Briſtol, and Liverpool. The city of Briſtol, to its honour as well as to its intereſt, has almoſt waſhed its hands of it. The city of London is doing the ſame thing, for there are but few employed in it now, in that port. That in Liverpool it would continue longer if not aboliſhed by law, I have no doubt; for there the maxim of *defendit numerus* applies. But I am confident that if it proceeds with ſuch rapid ſtrides to decline, as it has done of late, no man engaged in the Slave Trade will be able ſoon to ſhew his face. No dealer in human blood, even in the town of Liverpool, will be long able to encounter the execration of all mankind by continuing it. And while the friends of the Trade talk of danger in the diſcuſſion, by which they mean only danger to the continuance of the Trade, for that danger certainly muſt attend the diſcuſſion of it; the friends of the Abolition take pleaſure in ſeeing the moral effect of that diſcuſſion. For it is impoſſible, after ſo much debate in this Houſe; after ſhewing this traffick in its true colours; it is impoſſible, I ſay, that men will long conſent to be the active inſtruments in ſuch an execrated practice. The Weſt India planters may ſay they want ſupplies for their eſtates, and ſome perſons, connected with the commerce of the country, may, now and then, expreſs a wiſh that ſuch a Trade ſhould be continued; but I ſhould like to hear any Member of this Houſe ſay that he ſhould wiſh to ſee any friend of his, or a ſon of his, embark in this abominable traffick, whatever might be his proſpect of gain. If there be any ſuch perſon in this Houſe, I can only ſay his mind is differently conſtituted from mine.

Mr.

ſome expreſſions made uſe of, in the latter part of this debate. But firſt, a word or two, on what fell from the Honourable Member for Liverpool, and was touched upon, by a Noble Lord (CASTLEREAGH). They ſpoke of my ardent zeal in this cauſe, as if I had taken a more active part in it on the preſent than any former occaſion; Now, upon that point, I muſt ſay, that if there be any ſubject which has been canvaſſed during the time I have ſat in Parliament, on which I can leſs accuſe myſelf of negligence or remiſſneſs, than another, it is the ſubject which is now before us.

One word on what fell from a Right Honourable Gentleman (Mr. CANNING) oppoſite to me, which I conſider as neither very honourable to himſelf, nor to the cauſe he profeſſes to ſupport; for he ſaid that the cauſe of his riſing was the mere circumſtance of one Honourable Member (Sir JOHN NEWPORT) having uttered a ſingle ſentence on this ſide of the Houſe, which might create a ſuſpicion, that this meaſure was oppoſed on ſome other ground than that of individual feeling. Whether the ſpeech of the Right Honourable Gentleman was calculated to do away this ſuſpicion, I ſhall leave to the Houſe to conſider.

Now, Sir, with regard to the merits of this ſubject, and of the conduct of thoſe who bring it forward; I certainly do not deny that we have many defects, much leſs do I ſet up my own conduct or the conduct of thoſe with whom I am connected, as an example to others; but this is certainly true, that in the courſe of eighteen years of what may be called oppoſition, in which I ſat on the other ſide of the Houſe, it never did occur to any of us, in all that time, and ſome part of it was a time of pretty violent heat, and what may be termed party ſpirit, although there did appear ſome ſuſpicious circumſtances concerning the ſincerity of certain perſons in this Houſe, in ſome of their profeſſions;—yet, I ſay, it never did occur to myſelf, or to any other Gentleman ſitting on my ſide of the Houſe, to take an opportunity, when diſcuſſing the Slave Trade, to enter into any general hoſtility againſt Miniſters. Whether we deemed their conduct prudent or otherwiſe, the diſcuſſion of the Slave Trade, in which

queſtion

queſtion I had the good fortune to concur with the leading Member of that adminiſtration (Mr. PITT), was not the ſeaſon in which we took occaſion to cenſure their proceedings.

As to the time in which this ſubject is brought forward, my Honourable Friend (Mr. WILBERFORCE) was of opinion that we were too far advanced in the ſeſſion, to bring a Bill before the Houſe; and indeed that has been the principal objection urged to-night againſt the propoſed Reſolution, by its opponents.

The Right Honourable Gentleman ſeemed to charge us with idleneſs in delaying this ſubject ſo long. To a certain degree, I am afraid, I muſt plead guilty to that accuſation. Certainly the queſtion might have been brought forward earlier; but it was conſidered by myſelf to be material to know ſomething of the minds of others; and I do aſſure the Right Honourable Gentleman, I ſhould have been happy to have obtained his advice upon the ſubject.

As it was conſidered by myſelf, and thoſe whom I wiſhed moſt earneſtly to conſult, that it was too late for a Bill this ſeſſion; I hope I may ſtand excuſed for the courſe I have taken on this occaſion. When I ſay this, I ought to add, that thoſe with whom I thought myſelf bound to conſult, found more difficulty than I did, in bringing forward a Bill for the immediate Abolition of the African Slave Trade.

The Right Honourable Gentleman (Mr. CANNING) aſks, ſince my friends near me and myſelf are ready to go through with this buſineſs, why not do ſo, inſtead of bringing ſo imperfect a meaſure as a mere Reſolution before the Houſe. Now, Sir, if he thinks, as he ſeems to inſinuate, that all his Majeſty's Miniſters are ready to aſſent to any thing that profeſſes to have for its object the Abolition of the Slave Trade, without examining and digeſting its proviſions, he certainly has had extremely bad information. But I wiſh that one part of the Right Honourable Gentleman's aſſertions may turn out to be true. He ſays that this Reſolution brings before us a queſtion of abſolute unanimity. I hope it does, although he diſlikes it on that account. The Reſolution which we

are now diſcuſſing, was certainly drawn up with that view, and to lead to the Abolition of the African Slave Trade, in which the Right Honourable Gentleman aſſures us, he entirely concurs; and in which he would have my approbation if the meaſure were his own; and in which I have always had the good fortune to agree with the late Right Honourable Gentleman, to whoſe memory ſo many alluſions have been made in the courſe of this debate. In this we concurred from a common ſenſe and feeling of juſtice. In this we were always of one opinion; but it may be true, that our diſunion on other ſubjects may have been as well founded, as our compleat unanimity in this.

But this Motion of mine has been blamed by ſeveral Members, and among them the Right Honourable Gentleman, on account of its generality. "What! Do only "what you did in 1792, and which failed! What is the "utility of that?" Now, ſuppoſe I had brought in a Bill for the Abolition of this Trade, would they not anſwer me as they do now, and ſay, "Why two years ago you did the ſame thing as this, and your endeavour failed, where is the utility of repeating it? I have no objection indeed to the thing itſelf, yet I diſapprove of your bringing it forward now." The principle on which I have brought forward this Reſolution is to comprehend nothing in the nature of a pledge from this Houſe, except that the African Slave Trade, being contrary to the principles of juſtice, humanity, and ſound policy, ought to be aboliſhed; and that this Houſe will, with all practicable expedition, take ſuch meaſures as may be deemed adviſeable for its Abolition. Now, this being ſo very general, you gain nothing by it, ſay they; You are juſt were you were. I ſay, No. By giving a pledge that you will conſider the ſubject of the Abolition, you are not where you were; for any man who aſſents to this Reſolution, depoſits a pledge binding upon his character, that he will hereafter enter upon the inveſtigation of this ſubject, and conſider the means for effecting the Abolition of the African Slave Trade. Whether the propoſition for that purpoſe ſhall come from me or any other perſon, the Houſe by this Reſolution, pledges itſelf to attend to it: and whether the meaſure which ſhall be firſt propoſed be ſucceſsful or

otherwiſe,

otherwiſe, yet the pledge of the Houſe can never be redeemed until, by ſome meaſure or other, the thing ſhall have been done. It will be a pledge hanging over the head of every Member who ſhall have voted for it this day, until he has redeemed it, and that will not be done until the Abolition is accompliſhed.

But, it is ſaid, "it is a hard thing to be called upon to "vote for the Abolition of the Trade without knowing in "what mode it is intended to be done." Not at all; for it is for you to propoſe your own mode, if you do not like ours. But, "this can be of no uſe to you, it is nothing but a meaſure which comes annually before this Houſe, with as little deciſion of the real matter as all the previous diſcuſſions have produced." I anſwer, I am content to take this for the preſent, juſt as I would be content, in the firſt inſtance, with the grant of a ſupply for the ſervice of the year. In that caſe I would ſay, Give me your pledge that the money ſhall be granted, and I will, afterwards, propoſe to you, the means of raiſing it; and if the means which I ſhall propoſe for that purpoſe, be inadequate, or ineligible, you may ſuggeſt others. Why then, I ſay, determine, not *how* the Abolition ſhall be accompliſhed, which are the ways and means; but grant me the ſupply, which is your determination that the thing ſhall be done. You ſhall ſhew the preſent ſincerity of your determination, by the honeſty of your actions hereafter: and I am only aſking of you, to declare that you will proceed to aboliſh the Slave Trade at ſuch a period, and in ſuch a manner, as to yourſelves, hereafter, ſhall appear adviſeable. And when we come to debate that queſtion, I cannot help ſaying, that however my friends may feel upon it, I am moſt ſanguine in my hopes that we ſhall not fail of ſucceſs.

But there is another obſervation made by ſome of thoſe who wiſh for the continuance of this traffick, viz. "That this Houſe has ſhewn its diſapprobation of the "Abolition of the Slave Trade." But that is not true: it is a libel on this Houſe. This Houſe has not come to any vote at any time ſince the firſt diſcuſſion of this ſubject, which can even be tortured into a diſapprobation of the Abolition of the African Slave Trade. Nor has it

come to any vote tending to the diſapprobation of the meaſure propoſed by my Honourable Friend for the Abolition of that traffick. The utmoſt that can be ſaid upon that part of the matter is, that the Houſe had come to a vote to put it off: and you will alſo ſearch in vain, if by ſearching you expect to find, on the Journals of the Houſe of Lords, for any diſapprobation of the Abolition of the African Slave Trade. I believe you will find on their Journals, nothing but ſimply, "That the ſubject "was brought before them at a period when it was too "late for them to determine upon it in the courſe of that "ſeſſion of Parliament."

But it is ſaid, that the preſent reſolution is liable to the ſame objection, that it will meet with the ſame fate as the other did, and for the ſame reaſon, for that the Lords will not now agree to it. I certainly do not know whether they will agree to it or not, but if they do not, there will be nothing to prevent us from purſuing the reſolution hereafter, and doing every thing that depends on us towards the attainment of our object. If they do agree to the reſolution, as I hope they will, then we ſhall have gained a great point. We ſhall know that although the Abolition of this traffick cannot be adopted this year, yet that in the courſe of the next ſeſſion of Parliament, their Lordſhips will take the ſubject into conſideration, for the purpoſe of determining on the meaſure of the Abolition. Whatever mode of effecting it ſhall eventually be adopted, this reſolution may be conſidered as a preface to the Abolition of the African Slave Trade, by which I do think that much will have been gained, no ſuch meaſure having yet been taken by the other Houſe, notwithſtanding the repeated pledges of this. Sir, if the Houſe of Lords ſhould agree to this reſolution, I ſhall think it a great bleſſing, though I ſhall not deſpair if they do not. We ſhould therefore endeavour to gain their Lordſhip's judgment, and unite it to our own. Now, I ſay, comparing the mode which I now propoſe, with that of any other I have heard of; I think mine is the beſt that could be offered in the preſent ſtate of things. I ſhould, very readily, have brought in a bill for the Abolition of the Trade; but the difference would have been this.

this. If the Houſe were to grant me leave to bring in a bill to night, we could not expect that any expedition we could uſe in the progreſs of it, would enable us to take it up to the Houſe of Lords, in leſs than ten days, and this would afford thoſe among their Lordſhips who moſt earneſtly wiſh for the continuance of the Slave Trade; and there are many ſuch who will very ſtrenuouſly maintain their opinion; an opportunity for ſaying, and even good ground to ſay "There is no time for paſſing this important meaſure in this ſeſſion of Parliament; and theſe are not "times to agree to public meaſures of this magnitude, "without great deliberation." I am ſure, if any among their Lordſhips ſhould put it on this ground, it muſt be aſſented to, that there is no time for the proper diſcuſſion of this meaſure, in the preſent ſeſſion. And then another impreſſion might be made by the friends of the Slave Trade, injurious to the cauſe of Abolition. They would ſay, that the Houſe of Commons had, inconſiderately and raſhly, paſt a Bill which the Houſe of Lords thought too dangerous to our trade and commerce, to agree to. This would be circulated with great induſtry all over this country, and in the Weſt Indies. But by the courſe which is now propoſed to you, all that inconvenience will be avoided; and I do not think that we have reaſon to apprehend a difference of opinion between this Houſe and that of the Houſe of Lords, on the meaſure now before us; whatever difference might ariſe in the caſe of a bill. In every point of view, therefore, I conceive, that the courſe I have adopted on the preſent occaſion, is the beſt that could be taken, or I would not have taken it. I muſt, however, declare, that I ſhould, moſt certainly, have ſupported a Bill for the total Abolition of the African Slave Trade, if it had been brought in by the Honourable Gentleman (Mr. WILBERFORCE) oppoſite to me.

I ſhall not take this opportunity, becauſe, if I live, I am aſſured I ſhall have many others, of delivering my ſentiments, and in which I may poſſibly differ from ſome of my friends, as to the duration to be allowed to the Slave Trade; for I do think that the Slave Trade is ſuch a *malum in ſe*, that we ought as much to abſtain from it

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as we ſhould abſtain from murder. I think it an enormous crime to carry it on for any reaſon, or under any circumſtances; and that we ought, for that reaſon alone, if there were no other, to drop it at once. Some of my friends however, and I collect from the ſpeech of my Right Honourable Friend (Mr. WINDHAM) who ſpoke juſt now, that he is among the number, think otherwiſe, and in deference to their authority, I ſhall abſtain, for the preſent, from ſaying many things which now occur to me. I agree with my Right Honourable Friend who has juſt preceded me, in lamenting that Slavery itſelf is a thing for which we have no immediate remedy. It ſeems to be doubted by ſome whether we have power to legiſlate here, for the Weſt Indies. I own I have no difficulty on that ſubject; neither do I think the Houſe will have any difficulty on it when it ſhall come to be diſcuſſed. But on one part of it no body can have any doubt: I mean, as to making the murder of any human being in the King's dominions, puniſhable with death. It is impious to diſpute the principle. It is moſt abominable. It is inſufferable. It is a contempt of juſtice; a defiance of the Almighty; an outrageous attempt to ſtifle the voice of Nature. I will comment no more upon it. It needs no comment.

Now, as to the Slavery endured by the negroes in the Weſt Indies; I would take leave to aſk, by way of reply to ſomething that fell from my Right Honourable Friend, whether that and the evils of the African Slave Trade, are not ſeparate and diſtinct things? But I will go further and ſay, that even Slavery itſelf, odious as it is, is yet not nearly ſo bad a thing as the African Slave Trade. Slavery itſelf is an evil, and a great one, but it is an evil which has exiſted in different parts of this world, at different times of its hiſtory; and, perhaps, there never was a period in which it did not exiſt ſome where, nor a country wherein it did not exiſt at ſome time. But there never was a time in which any other evil exiſted that was comparable to that of the African Slave Trade. There never was, among human beings, before the inſtitution of the African Slave Trade, any thing like the cruelty of ſeizing multitudes by force, by rapine;

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ſupporting that ſeizure by murder; poſſeſſing them by fraud; by falſe accuſation; ſupporting ſuch accuſation by the mockery of juſtice; and all this for the purpoſe of carrying on this deteſtable Traffick; for the purpoſe of thranſporting them to a foreign country to Slavery for life. I ſay, there is nothing which reſembles theſe cruelties in all the ancient hiſtory of this world. As to what has been ſaid about Slavery having exiſted in all ages, I have admitted it. But where do you find the account of any of the cruelties I have juſt ſtated? and I have by no means ſtated them all. I am confident you will find nothing like them, or any of them, in the whole hiſtory of Aſia. It would be in vain to look for them in Europe, nor indeed in any other place. Even Slavery itſelf may be ſaid to have had no exiſtence after the eſtabliſhment of the Chriſtian religion, wherever that religion has been known, and the bleſſings of it felt: a religion which has, for its glory, done more to deſtroy Slavery, by doing away the evils which lead to it, than any other event in the whole hiſtory of this world. Am I to be told after this, Do not attempt to aboliſh the Slave Trade, becauſe Slavery has exiſted in the world at all times; when I have proved that nothing before it at any time, exiſted like the Slave Trade; and ſhall I be told this too at a time when the general condition of the world is ſo much improved? Why all this miſery ſhould be continued in compliment to a few perſons connected with the Weſt Indies, I cannot conceive.

But here, it is neceſſary for me to obſerve, that ſome Gentlemen have unaccountably miſconceived my meaning on the ſubject of ſlavery in the Weſt Indies. Some have conceived an opinion, that I had ſaid ſomething in favour of the emancipation of the ſlaves there. I certainly ſaid nothing for that emancipation, neither did I ſay any thing againſt it; but now, I will add a word to that part of the ſubject. I ſay you are ſo wrong in your calculation as to the effect of ſtopping the importation from the coaſt of Africa, that with good treatment, that is, with attention to the comfort and the morals of your negroes, they will multiply, ſo that you will have more of them than you will actually want. "What is to become of thoſe for whom

whom we have no employment?" you will aſk me. I anſwer, I hope I am not wrong in my judgment, although many others are leſs ſanguine in their hopes than I am, upon the good effects of the Abolition; but I do ſay, that that will happen which you ſay is impoſſible. I mean that the gradual effect of their moral improvement will be ſuch, that when they have become too numerous for your employment, you may ſafely ſend them to another place already emancipated. But this is a ſubject which it is not neceſſary to diſcuſs at the preſent period; and poſſibly may never become neceſſary to be diſcuſſed in this Houſe; nor for any Houſe of a Britiſh Parliament. I muſt here be allowed to ſay, however, that the conſideration of the ſupply of ſlaves to the Weſt Indies from the coaſt of Africa, and the emancipation of ſlaves in the Weſt Indies, are two as diſtinct points as any two unconnected propoſitions that ever were ſtated, at two diſtinct times, in this Houſe; and how they came to be confounded by perſons of intelligence, it is not ſo eaſy to gueſs, as it is to be aſtoniſhed at it.

But we are told, your legiſlation here is fruitleſs; you never can aboliſh this traffick, without the leave of the Planters. I am perfectly convinced we can, and I ſhould be ſorry indeed if we could not; (but I have no time to argue that now); for then our labours would be, what you ſay they are, perfectly fruitleſs. If we cannot accompliſh the Abolition of the African Slave Trade, without the conſent of the Planters; you have ample proof that you will never be able to do it at all.

But with regard to the emancipation, I perfectly agree in what has been ſaid, that the idea of an Act of Parliament to emancipate the Slaves in the Weſt Indies, without the conſent and concurrent feeling of all parties concerned, both in this country and in that, would not only be miſchievous in its conſequences, but totally extravagant in its conception, as well as impracticable in its execution; and therefore I ſee no good in diſcuſſing that point. The Abolition of the African Slave Trade is what I hope will be ſoon accompliſhed, but the emancipation of Slaves, or the end of Slavery in the Weſt Indies, is what I cannot hope to ſee. But, if I were ſure it would

would never have that effect, I ſhould not be the leſs jealous in the cauſe in which I am engaged, becauſe the Abolition of the African Slave Trade, would be the accompliſhment of a great and good work, even if it ſhould never be followed by the Abolition of Slavery in the Weſt Indies. I ſhould think that the Britiſh Parliament would, in that caſe, have acted its part by delivering the Britiſh nation from the guilt and ſhame of this hateful traffick. But an Honourable Gentleman (Mr. MANNING) has ſaid, that "the African Slave Trade reproaches not us, it is a "Trade carried on under Britiſh law, and that it is, to all "intents a Britiſh Trade." It certainly is ſo; and therefore it is a Trade within the juriſdiction, and controul of the Britiſh Parliament. When the Honourable Gentleman ſays, "you have encouraged this Trade;" I do not deny the fact; I am bound to admit it. But then by ſo much more do I ſay, it is your duty to atone for it, and to put an end to the miſchief which you have thereby occaſioned. And if any body ſuffers by the adoption of that courſe of juſtice, and the injury is ſatisfactorily made out; let a compenſation be made to the party who ſuſtains it. And here I would obſerve, that I would not conſider ſo much the magnitude of the compenſation, as the juſtice of it. But why, in the firſt inſtance, we are to begin with compenſation, before the Abolition is agreed to, I cannot underſtand. I agree with him whoſe name has been ſo frequently introduced into this debate, that the Parliament of this country ſhould do no act which ſhall occaſion any injury to an individual; that none of the ſubjects of the King ſhould have any reaſon to complain of the injuſtice of Parliament. Let all claims on the juſtice of this Houſe, in conſequence of any of its acts, be examined, and, upon due proof of the juſtice of ſuch claim, let compenſation be made; but do not let us admit that an injury will, undoubtedly, be ſuſtained and a compenſation be neceſſary, but that it will not be granted by Parliament. That would be a recognition, before the fact, of the injuſtice of Parliament, and an aſperſion of its character without any foundation for it in practice. I own that, as far as my opinion goes, I do not ſee the probability of compenſation being juſtly

claimed, to any large amount. Hypothetical caſes may be put, of ſome claims which ſhould not be reſiſted; but I think they are likely to be of comparatively ſmall amount. However, that is matter for the future conſideration of this Houſe. The only propoſition before us, at preſent, is, that the Slave Trade ought to be aboliſhed, and *I* ſay that it ought to be aboliſhed in as ſhort a time as poſſible. I do not, by that, mean to convey an idea, that it muſt be aboliſhed in as ſhort a time as it is, literally ſpeaking, poſſible; but, that means ſhould be taken for aboliſhing it, in as ſhort a time as may be conſiſtent with the circumſtances of the caſe. I rejoice at what I have heard to-night, by which we find that, almoſt without exception, the African Slave Trade has been held up in this Houſe to the execration of mankind. Even the Honourable Members who think it cannot be aboliſhed, have, in their ſpeeches, admitted the character of it to be deteſtable. This muſt give pleaſure to the Houſe, as it has done to me. It goes to the conviction of men's underſtandings, while it gratifies their feelings. We ſhould retain in our memory, the execration of this Trade, and mix an expreſſion to that effect with the execution of our duty in the Abolition of this abominable Traffick.

As to the giving of notice now, of bringing this ſubject forward next Seſſion, which ſeems to have been the wiſh of a few Gentlemen, I own I think that the beſt notice we can give of our intention to proceed next Seſſion to aboliſh this Trade, is that of agreeing to this Reſolution. And I would add, that thoſe who think otherwiſe have, in truth, no reaſon to complain; for whatever inconvenience, (if there be any) might attend a Reſolution of this kind, would likewiſe attend a notice; and, in every other reſpect, a Reſolution is much ſuperior to a Notice. But it is neceſſary for me to go ſomewhat further than I have yet done, upon this ſubject.

It has been ſtated that the African Slave Trade will probably increaſe, in conſequence of this Reſolution, between the time of paſſing it and the period at which the Abolition may take place, unleſs ſome meaſure be taken immediately, to prevent it; and I own I have that apprehenſion myſelf; for which reaſon, it is certainly my intention

intention to move for leave to bring in a Bill; it will be a very ſhort one; for preventing any Ships, except thoſe previouſly employed in this Trade, from being engaged in it in future; or any engagement or contract from being entered into for the building of Ships for that purpoſe. I really think that no man can reaſonably object to this. Thoſe even who are the moſt partial to the Trade, muſt admit the propriety of this meaſure. They muſt allow that this Reſolution, intended as it is to be a prelude to the Abolition of the African Slave Trade, ought not to have the effect of increaſing it. Nor can it injure thoſe who are engaged in the Trade now. I therefore ſhall certainly move for leave to bring in a Bill to prevent any ſhips being engaged in this Traffick, except ſuch as are already in it.

Now, Sir, with regard to what I mean to do hereafter, I need ſay but little. I have ſtated to the Houſe, in the plaineſt way I could, that it is my intention, as early as poſſible, that is, within a very ſhort time of the meeting of Parliament, to move for leave to bring in a Bill for the Abolition of the African Slave Trade; and alſo to proceed to the adoption of any other means which may be deemed neceſſary for the attainment of that object. I ſtate this now, that there may be no foundation for any complaint of the want of notice.

As to the ſubject of negociation with Foreign Powers for the Abolition of the African Slave Trade, France for inſtance, and other powers; for there are other powers engaged in the Slave Trade, and eſpecially the United States of America, whoſe concurrence it would be extremely deſirable we ſhould obtain to the Abolition of this Trade, as well indeed as that of any other power that may be engaged in it. And from what I have obſerved of the States of America, there ſeems to be no unwillingneſs to enter into ſuch an agreement: they have indeed already proceeded on the Abolition: it is already aboliſhed in every province in the United States, except Carolina, and even there it muſt ceaſe in no long time, as the Congreſs will be able and have ſhewn every diſpoſition to aboliſh it on the firſt of January, 1808. There are others whom we may negociate with for the Abolition, ſuch as

Spain and Portugal. I do not know, perhaps I may be too ſanguine, in my hopes; but I incline to think we ſhall not have much difficulty in prevailing on theſe powers to join us in this object. But then, it is ſaid the great power is in the hands of the Emperor of France, and he will not conſent to this Abolition. Sir, I certainly have no influence whatever with him. If I had, I ſhould have diſſuaded him from doing many things which he has done, and which, in my opinion, would have been much better, even for himſelf, if he had not done, more conducive to his own fame too, and to the ſatisfaction of his country as well as that of Europe in general. But that matter muſt be governed by his opinion, not mine, while he continues to poſſeſs ſuch power. But the Noble Lord ſtates, that the government of France is, at preſent, very adverſe to the Abolition of the African Slave Trade. That is, certainly, very much my opinion, but does it thence follow, that France will follow it after Great Britain ſhall have given it up?—While Great Britain continues the Trade, I believe France will continue it, but whether France will continue it after Great Britain ſhall have aboliſhed it, is a very different queſtion. I do not ſay there are very ſanguine hopes of the conjunction of France in the Abolition of the African Slave Trade; but until the Abolition can be accompliſhed, all the means which are in our power ſhould be tried, and I know of none better adapted for its object than that we ſhould propoſe to join with that power in the Abolition. I am not very ſanguine in the reſult of it, but ſtill I hope it will do ſome good.

Now, I have gone through, I believe, every part of the ſubject that was neceſſary for me to touch upon to-night, except that which relates to St. Domingo. I certainly was a friend to the Abolition of the African Slave Trade before the diſturbances took place in St. Domingo; but ſo far am I from conſidering the ſtate of that Iſland as a reaſon againſt the Abolition of the African Slave Trade, that I regard it as a very ſtrong reaſon for adopting that meaſure, as the beſt means to avoid ſimilar miſchiefs in our own Iſlands. And I believe that from an attentive peruſal of the beſt hiſtories of the Weſt Indies, we ſhall find,

find, that St. Domingo was a place where the recent importation of negroes from the Coaſt of Africa was very great; and is it not probable, to ſay the leaſt of it, that much of the continuance of the miſery of that ill-fated Iſland has been owing to the immenſe influx of new ſlaves from the Coaſt of Africa?

On theſe grounds I hope I ſhall be excuſed for taking up ſo much of your time, and I ſhall only add, that I hope we ſhall, very early in the next ſeſſion, adopt ſome mode for the final Abolition of the African Slave Trade; the mode of my Honourable Friend (Mr. WILBERFORCE) I ſhould truſt; if not, ſome other that may anſwer the general purpoſe.

The queſtion was then put, and ſtrangers withdrew. The Reſolution was carried,

Ayes - - - - -	114
Noes - - - - -	15
Majority	99

Mr. WILBERFORCE, after the diviſion, in a neat, ſhort, but eloquent ſpeech, proceeded to move an Addreſs to His Majeſty, praying he might be graciouſly pleaſed to direct a Negociation to be entered into, by which Foreign Powers ſhould be invited to co-operate with His Majeſty, in meaſures to be adopted for the Abolition of the African Slave Trade.

This Addreſs was carried without a diviſion.

It was likewiſe moved and carried, that theſe Reſolutions ſhould be communicated to the Lords, and that their concurrence in them ſhould be deſired

HOUSE OF LORDS,

24th JUNE, 1806.

THE Earl of WESTMORELAND propoſed, that counſel and evidence ſhould be heard at the Bar, upon the ſubject of the Slave Trade, and againſt the Reſolution brought up from the Houſe of Commons preparatory to the Abolition.

Lord GRENVILLE.—I wiſh to ſtate that I do not think that this is a ſubject which will require the attendance of any witneſſes; ſtill leſs, if poſſible, the aid of legal eloquence; for I do not apprehend that any thing which counſel can ſtate, will induce me, at leaſt, to think that evidence ſhould be heard on this ſubject.

The Earl of WESTMORELAND.—I wiſh to know whether a meaſure ſuch as this—of ſuch importance as this—ever paſſed this Houſe without hearing evidence? I will leave the matter here; the Noble Lord will uſe his power as he pleaſes.

Lord GRENVILLE.—I poſſeſs no power over your Lordſhips judgment. I can only ſubmit to it what occurs to me. The Noble Lord preſented a petition ſome time ago, on this ſubject, and this day he knows was appointed for the diſcuſſion of it. When the Noble Lord preſented his petition, I did not endeavour to hinder the diſcuſſion; indeed nothing could hinder the diſcuſſion if the Noble Lord wiſhed to have it debated, whether counſel and evidence ſhould be heard at your Bar. And if the petitioners thought they had any real ground for their ſtatement, they would have found ſome individual in this Houſe, I dare ſay, to make this application for them ſooner. I, for one, proteſt againſt this mode of entering into an extraneous debate previous to the diſcuſſion of the order of the day, evidently for the purpoſe of conſuming time. The Noble Earl can move, if he pleaſes, that evidence

evidence be heard, previous to your entering on the buſineſs of the day, and then, if there be any objection to that courſe, the objection may be ſtated.

The Earl of WESTMORELAND.—I am charged with introducing this diſcuſſion for the purpoſe of procraſtination, and to take the Houſe by ſurprize—which are not my objects; but I would put it to the Noble Lord whether he would chuſe to proceed on ſuch a ſubject as this, without hearing evidence?

Lord GRENVILLE.—My Lords, I move that the Order of the Day be now read.

The Order of the Day for taking into conſideration the Reſolution of the Houſe of Commons, "That this "Houſe conſidering the African Slave Trade to be con- "trary to the principles of juſtice, humanity, and found "policy, will, with all practicable expedition, take effec- "tual meaſures for the Abolition of the ſaid Trade, in "ſuch manner and at ſuch period as may be deemed "adviſeable,"—being read,

Lord GRENVILLE roſe, and ſpoke to the following effect.—My Lords, the great unwillingneſs I have felt to diſcuſs the topic you have juſt diſpoſed of, will, I am ſure, appear, by the earneſt deſire I now ſhew to addreſs you on another. My Lords, it is a queſtion well calculated to engage the fineſt ſentiments, and excite the warmeſt feelings of the human heart; but it is, at the ſame time, a queſtion which ſhould not be decided by the effuſions of a blind, though generous paſſion, but by cool judgment, involving, as it does, a large portion of the intereſts of the Britiſh empire, of which it is your Lordſhips duty, as an Houſe of Parliament, to take care; and involving more eſpecially the character, the intereſts, and the ſafety of your Colonies.

My Lords, the Reſolution, which I am about to propoſe to your Lordſhips to concur in, was brought to us from another Houſe of Parliament, and is a concluſion drawn from certain premiſes. The points therefore which common ſenſe and reaſon direct us to examine and diſcuſs, are, firſt: Whether the premiſes be true? And, if that be

decided

decided in the affirmative—2dly, Whether the concluſion be juſt?

The Houſe of Commons has conſidered this matter with very long and laborious attention. For twenty years it has been the ſubject of examination, inquiry, and diſcuſſion in that Houſe; where it has been ſifted to the bottom; and therefore, there is no longer any pretence for ſaying that any part of the ſubject is unknown to any one; or that there is any intereſt, or any aſſertion of intereſt, in any one connected with it, which has not been repeatedly brought forward in public. The Houſe of Commons has thought proper, once more, to advert to what they have on former occaſions done, and what they conceive to be their duty on this ſubject; and they have ſtated on what ground, my Lords, they now preſent the ſame Reſolution which they formerly preſented to your Lordſhips. And, if I recommend this Reſolution to you now, I deſire to be underſtood to do ſo, not becauſe there is no time for inquiry, but becauſe there is no need for inquiry;—not becauſe you cannot now devote your whole time, attention, and labour, until you ſhall have arrived at what you conceive to be a juſt concluſion upon this ſubject; but becauſe you are already arrived, or rather paſſed, the ſtage in which that concluſion was drawn, not only by you, my Lords, but by all the intelligent and virtuous part of mankind, except thoſe few perſons who are blinded by their prejudices, and by a miſtaken ſenſe of their own intereſt, on account of their connection with this Traffick. I have therefore no doubt your Lordſhips minds are made up to agree to this Reſolution, which ſtates,

"That the African Slave Trade being contrary to "the principles of juſtice, humanity, and ſound policy, "you will, with all practicable expedition, take effectual "meaſures for aboliſhing the ſaid Trade, at ſuch time, "and in ſuch manner, as may be deemed adviſeable."

My Lords, the firſt queſtion is this—Is it true or falſe, that the African Slave Trade is contrary to juſtice, contrary to humanity, and contrary to ſound policy? In the firſt place, is it contrary to humanity? Becauſe if it is contrary to humanity, it muſt be contrary to juſtice.

My Lords, Does that man exiſt; is there one human being on the face of the earth, in his ſenſes, who will riſe up and ſay, that the African Slave Trade, lawful or unlawful, is not contrary to humanity? My Lords; if we were to define humanity, what ſhould we ſay it was? What are its attributes; what is its character? "A ſympathy of feeling for the diſtreſs of others—a deſire to accompliſh good ends by good means." Let any man examine theſe qualities, and tell you, if he can, how the Slave Trade agrees with either of them; and if he cannot, I think we can have no difficulty in ſaying, that the Slave Trade is contrary to humanity.

My Lords; what is the purpoſe of the African Slave Trade? To ſeize human beings by force and violence, by artifice and fraud, and to carry them away from their friends, their families, and their country, for the pecuniary profit of thoſe whom they never ſaw, and into a country they never knew, to toil in Slavery for life. That is the very definition of the Trade:—to carry a vaſt number of human beings, by thouſands and by tens of thouſands, from the coaſt of Africa, their native land, for the purpoſe of being purchaſed, like ſo many head of cattle by your Planters, and made Slaves for life, in order to cultivate your Colonies in the Weſt Indies. My Lords, is it any thing like humanity to tear human creatures from their native ſoil and to ſell them for Slaves for life, in another country? To deprive them by force, and fraud, and cruelty, of all thoſe things in which it has pleaſed the Creator to make the happineſs of his creatures to conſiſt;—in the maintenance of ſociety, in the charities of dear relations, of huſband and wife, of father, ſon, and other kindred? In the due diſcharge of the relative duties of theſe different characters conſiſts almoſt all the happineſs of human life. The endearments of ſociety depend upon them; and in depriving human beings of ſuch endearments, do you not take away from them all happineſs whatever? My Lords, next to theſe things which I have thus briefly ſtated as the great foundation of happineſs in ſociety, is the happineſs of freedom. Civil freedom, conſiſts, chiefly, in the protection which is *afforded to* perſon and to property. But freedom, in its

pure

pure and natural ſenſe is one of the greateſt gifts of God to man. Both of theſe bleſſings, however, are annihilated by the Slave Trade.

My Lords, this in my preſent way of putting it, is a mere abſtract queſtion, and upon that abſtract queſtion it is ſufficient to ſhow that the ſyſtem of the Slave Trade, however carried on, is inconſiſtent with humanity. But, my Lords, Is this all? Can we flatter ourſelves that the miſchief which it has created, will not be remembered for many ages, to our reproach? And, indeed, I am afraid it is much greater than any of us conceive; certainly much greater than has been produced by any other ſyſtem of policy, or of trade, that ever was adopted by this country, or indeed by any other; for there is nothing comparable to the evil of the African Slave Trade to be found in the whole hiſtory of this world, ancient or modern. In ancient times, as hiſtory informs us, there were ſlaves made of captives taken in war. This was the practice of ancient Greece; but all the neighbouring ſtates knew they were ſubject to the ſame calamity, and this had the univerſal effect of leſſening the cruelties exerciſed over the unhappy victims, becauſe the conquered were ſubject, in their turn, to the ſame diſaſter. But we are carrying on a trade in ſlavery, of which I hope in God we ſhall never be the objects; and that no misfortune ſhall remind us of the miſeries of captivity; and yet we ought to remind ourſelves of it. But ſuch is the diſpoſition of the mind of man, that he does not really ſympathize in thoſe miſeries in which he is not a ſufferer himſelf; and hence ariſes the facility with which men can ſpeak of the miſeries of the African Slave Trade, almoſt without emotion. But we ſhould feel for ſuch miſeries, however improbable it is that we ourſelves may become the objects of them. This reflection ſhould lead us to a determination to remove the evil, not by trying to render that tolerable, which is, in its nature, abſolutely intolerable; not to try to render that humane, which is inhuman; but to aboliſh the thing itſelf; for there is no other remedy for the evil; and this is not only our duty, but we are really inexcuſable for not having performed it long ago. The practice is much more cruel

in us than if it was founded on ſomething like neceſſity; for which there is no pretence in our caſe.

My Lords, in what manner are the ſlaves procured? Do not let us deceive ourſelves on this ſubject. We ſhould have the fortitude to look at the cruelties of this practice, however they may excite our horror. Have we forgotten the evidence which has been adduced to ſhew that our practice of this traffick tends to keep a large portion of the habitable globe in bondage? We poſſeſs the moſt indiſputable teſtimony of the cruelty of this Traffick; for a well-known author (BRYAN EDWARDS), being himſelf a Planter, and a dealer in ſlaves, and beſides, an advocate for the continuance of the Traffick, tells you, I know not for what purpoſe except truth; and he ſpeaks not from hearſay, but from actual knowledge; that by far the larger part of them are put into that ſituation by the crimes of thoſe who take them.

My Lords, if it were true, that Chriſtianity had not civilized the world, and that theſe practiſes, which we now ſhudder to hear of; ſuch as ſelling captives made in war, did ſtill continue to be avowed by ſtates, and did furniſh to the ſtate, extenſive means of ſupply, and that the African Slave Trade was nothing but a continuance of that practice; let me aſk your Lordſhips, whether it be humane in us to make ourſelves dealers in it. All nations calling themſelves civilized; nay, many to whom we have denied the character of civilization; have aboliſhed this hateful practice, as being inconſiſtent with humanity. By whom is it continued? By us who call ourſelves the moſt civilized. By what means is it kept up? By the wars of Africa, inſtigated, not by the paſſions of the inhabitants of Africa, but by our avarice; becauſe if it were not for this Traffick, thus carried on by us, there would be no motive for engaging in many if not moſt of thoſe wars.

My Lords; it is ſaid that all the cruelties exerciſed over the negroes are done by the Africans themſelves; and that thoſe negroes who are purchaſed by us, would be put to death by them, if we did not buy them. By this aſſertion, intended I preſume, as a defence of the *African Slave* Trade, we are made the executioners of

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the inhuman cruelties of the inhabitants of Africa. In civilized nations, even when acting under the authority of the law, the office of executioner is generally an odious office; and yet you, the firſt nation upon earth, by the continuance of this Traffick, ſtoop to become the executioners of the cruelties of the moſt barbarous people upon earth. It is ſaid, as an excuſe for our conduct, that we do this to prevent cruelties. What ſhall we ſay, my Lords, if it ſhould turn out that we are the cauſe of thoſe very cruelties which we affect to prevent? But if it were not ſo; ſhall we condeſcend to be the executioners of the cruelties of bloody tyrants whoſe names cannot be mentioned, or whoſe character cannot be alluded to, in this Houſe, but with horror? Upon this point there ought to be no more queſtion than upon the queſtion I have already diſpoſed of, namely, whether the Traffick be humane or inhuman?

The next thing to be noticed, is a practice which is prevalent in Africa, and is diſtinct from that of making captives in war, I mean the practice of "man-ſtealing." This is another ſource of ſupply to the Slave Trade, and we are the perſons who excite and encourage this ſyſtem of violence and fraud.

My Lords, theſe are the modes by which this Trade is carried on. How inhuman a ſyſtem towards thoſe who are its wretched victims!—I will not ſay by what fraud, what robbery, what bloodſhed, this ſyſtem is kept up. I will not ſay over what a large track of the habitable globe you ſpread this miſery; over nearly a whole quarter of the world, the inhabitants of which are, by your practices, and for your avarice, doomed to ſlavery, after hundreds and thouſands of their countrymen have been murdered to effect your object! And of the truth of all this, no human being, who has the gift of reaſon, and will peruſe the evidence, can entertain a ſingle doubt. While you give encouragement to war in Africa; war will prevail there. While you give encouragement to fraud, violence and cruelty, in Africa; fraud, violence and cruelty will prevail there. Remember, my Lords, that this can only be done by your conſent.

My Lords, the unhappy victims being thus procured, in what manner are they carried to another country, and how are they treated in their tranſit?—We have on our table, and we have all read enough, and more than enough, of the cruelties of what is called the Middle Paſſage. My Lords, the hearts even of thoſe who were ſteeled againſt every thing that was urged againſt the Traffick in general, were unable to bear the recital of the cruelties of this part of it. My Lords, we endeavoured, but endeavoured in vain, to remedy the evil. There is but one remedy that can be applied with effect; for as long as you ſuffer your ſhips to ſail in this Traffick of human blood; [Hear! Hear! Hear! from various parts of the Houſe] as long as you ſuffer your ſhips to ſail in this Traffick of human blood; as long as you ſteal men from the coaſt of Africa, and carry them by force to the Weſt Indies; ſo long will you have human beings (who are called men), whoſe hearts are ſteeled againſt humanity, who will inflict, without remorſe, every ſpecies of cruelty on their victims, by which profit may be produced, or even expected. The miſery of their fellow-creatures is nothing to ſuch perſons, when in competition with profit; and therefore, all the meaſures which were ſo laudably taken by the Legiſlature in favour of the health, and with a view of alleviating the ſufferings, of theſe wretched beings, have failed of their intended effect. It is true they did a little good; but cruelty being the eſſence of the Traffick, miſery is the inevitable effect, notwithſtanding any legiſlative regulation which you may adopt. Whatever cruelties are practiſed in that Paſſage, they can ſeldom if ever be proved but on the teſtimony of thoſe who inflict them, or are acceſſary to the infliction; and therefore it is not rational to expect the beſt proof that can be given of theſe cruelties, at any time. There is evidence, however, my Lords, upon this part of the ſubject, and I could, almoſt have wiſhed it had been repeated at your bar, to impreſs upon the mind of every one of your Lordſhips, that which has long been impreſſed on mine, evidence in many inſtances, not by witneſſes who were called in favour of the Abolition of the Slave Trade; but againſt it. I could wiſh that the witneſſes ſhould declare to you, my Lords, in their own

language,

language, their ſavage brutal language, the acts which themſelves commit, and which, according to their feelings, are juſtified by the neceſſity of the thing, and which, for aught I know, may be abſolutely neceſſary for the attainment of their object in the courſe of their odious purſuit. I am perfectly confident that if your Lordſhips were, now, to hear at your bar, thoſe who are employed in the paſſage of the negroes, declare what they do, and what they juſtify the doing of from the neceſſity of it; in ſhort what is called the *Defence* of the Traffick; your Lordſhips would regard it as a perfectly good reaſon for the Abolition.

My Lords, ſome expreſſions I uſed on a former night, I never can ceaſe to repeat, becauſe they appear to me to be expreſſions adapted to impreſs upon the mind of every man, a juſt ſenſe of the nature of this Traffick, I mean, "That "in the paſſage of the negroes from the Coaſt of Africa, "there is a greater portion of human miſery condenſed "within a ſmaller ſpace than has ever yet been found in "any other place on the face of this globe." I have often repeated, and I ſay again, "That men who are "engaged in this Traffick, do, for the gratification of "their avarice, preſs together and condenſe a greater "portion of human beings in one maſs of common miſery, "than ever were put together in the ſame ſpace, in any "other inſtance, at any time, upon the face of this globe." —Never will I ceaſe to utter this ſentence when occaſion ſhall require it, while I poſſeſs the power of ſpeech— never ſhall I ceaſe to lift up my voice, exclaim and proteſt to Heaven, againſt this moſt frightful injuſtice; and I will add, that if you have no ſenſe of feeling for the helpleſs Africans, who are torn from their country, their families, and friends; if the practices employed to procure them, fraud, violence, and bloodſhed, do not excite your horror, turn your eyes to the ſhips employed in the paſſage of theſe victims from their native land, to their land of Slavery See the miſery on board. If this cannot affect you, and make you exclaim againſt the Traffick; turn your eyes upon your own intereſt, and ſee the *mortality it creates among your ſeamen*, and then let me aſk you whether, even upon the ſcore of intereſt, any thing can juſtify your conduct in continuing the Slave Trade?

Whether

Whether any good, if good it were, that can attend this Traffick, can counterbalance ſo much evil? But my Lords—What is meant to be attained by all this? The end is, my Lords, that theſe moſt wretched Africans, if they ſurvive the ſickneſs ariſing from the ſtench and peſtilence of their paſſage, ſhall be carried to your Weſt India Iſlands, there to be doomed to interminable Slavery.

My Lords, we have been ſo much accuſtomed to words deſcriptive of the cruelty of this traffick, that we have, almoſt, forgotten their meaning. Would to God that a perſon educated as an Engliſhman, well acquainted with our language, and able to deliver his ſentiments in it with fluency; inſtructed in our holy religion, and now, for the firſt time informed of all the horrors of the African Slave Trade; had to addreſs your Lordſhips on the ſubject of its Abolition, What would be the feelings of ſuch a man, and how would he expreſs himſelf to you upon ſuch a ſubject, and what would you yourſelves feel, my Lords, if it were the firſt time you heard of theſe things, and were aſſured of their exiſtence, and that they were practiced in the dominions of your own Sovereign, but could not be continued without your conſent? Is it poſſible to conceive, that you would heſitate, for one moment, to order that ſuch enormities ſhould ceaſe? But the continuance of this hateful traffick has made cruelty familiar to us; and the recital of its horrors has been ſo frequently repeated, that we can now hear them ſtated without being affected as we ſhould be. We can now hear, almoſt without emotion, of thouſands and tens of thouſands of human beings being kept in this miſerable exiſtence! I would not tire your Lordſhips on this ſubject, but I would intreat you to conſider what that exiſtence is. Multitudes of human creatures under the arbitrary will of a cruel taſk-maſter, riſing in the morning and lying down at night under the laſh of his whip; who can hardly be ſuppoſed to dream of any thing but torture, and who awake

—— " only to diſcover ſights of woe,
" Regions of ſorrow, doleful ſhades, where peace
" And reſt can never dwell, hope never comes
" That comes to all; but torture without end
" Still urges "——

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There is no mitigation to their ſufferings: they know no change, except the humour of their maſter to whom their whole deſtiny, from day to day, and every moment of the day, is entruſted; and whoſe diſcretion is frequently ſo abuſed as to produce every extremity ſhort of murder; nay, often terminating in murder itſelf. But we flatter ourſelves by ſaying, that, in the Weſt Indies, the negroes are ſubject to the will of Engliſhmen; and, no doubt, theſe are humane, mild and gentle in their conduct. My Lords, I can pay no ſuch compliment either to my countrymen, or any other perſons, at the expence of what I know to be the voice of human nature. My Lords, the very poſſeſſion of arbitrary power, and even the faireſt exerciſe of it, is a never failing corrupter of the human heart. I never heard of, and, thank God, I never ſaw, any thing in the human character that makes it conſiſtent with probability that man is ſo vicious that he is at once and in the firſt inſtance capable of all the cruelties which he ſometimes commits. No, my Lords, it is the daily exerciſe of arbitrary power which vitiates the human character and hardens it into conſummate cruelty. And thus it is that men of naturally good diſpoſitions, can look with indifference on the condition of theſe miſerable human beings who are doomed to toil from morning till night under the ſcorching rays of a vertical ſun for the whole of their lives, for the mere purpoſe of improving the property of others. In ſuch a ſtate, it might be expected that they ſhould be allowed to eſcape additional cruelties; and yet there are many cruelties added, the effect of the exerciſe of which, is to blunt the fineſt feelings of the human heart. Let us not flatter ourſelves that it can be otherwiſe. We ſhould not repoſe confidence in ourſelves, or ſuppoſe that our own hearts would not be blunted by theſe practices. I am ſure, my Lords, that I would not truſt myſelf with the repeated ſight of theſe cruelties, leſt it ſhould blunt my feelings, and leſſen the ſympathy which I wiſh to poſſeſs at the ſight of human ſuffering. But ſuppoſing we could confide in ourſelves, and that we ſhould never be brought to aſſent to any thing that is inhuman; I aſk you, what ſecurity you have, that the Taſk-maſters, the Overſeers,

the Drivers of theſe negroes, will not treat them cruelly; for the puniſhment of them is not in the hands of the Planters, but of the Taſk-maſters and Drivers. If it were in the hands of the Planters, it is poſſible that the conſideration of their own intereſt might operate, in ſome degree, to prevent cruelty from being inflicted upon the negroes; that is to ſay, the Planter might, from motives of ſelf-intereſt, be induced to have much the ſame ſort of diſpoſition to take care of his negroes, as a farmer would have for his cattle. But the negroes have not the protection even of that ſpecies of feeling, for their Driver and Taſk-maſter has no ſuch intereſt to actuate him; and I need not tell your Lordſhips from what order of ſociety the Negroe Drivers and the Negroe Taſk-maſters are taken, nor what their notions are concerning cruelty. We are indeed told, that theſe evils are greatly mitigated; and that every thing has been done that could be done, to meliorate the condition of the negroes all over our Plantations. My Lords, I do not think ſo. In many inſtances individuals may have exerted themſelves, moſt laudably, for that purpoſe, and may have effected a good deal, (God forbid that I ſhould attempt to depreciate the value of their endeavours;) and if they have not effected more, their failure is owing to the nature of the ſyſtem; for there is in Slavery ſomething ſo abhorrent to our nature, that whatever we attempt to do under it, by way of improvement, muſt be very limited in its effect. Slavery may be ſaid to take away one half; nay, my Lords, more than one half, of the human character; and it has, therefore, been your practice, and the practice of every other nation, wherein Slavery has exiſted, to reject the teſtimony of a Slave, in every caſe, againſt a free man. I do not blame the law, becauſe it may be neceſſary; but look at the effect of it. You make a law by which it is provided, that each negroe ſhall have a given portion of food in a given time, of rice, for inſtance, and that he ſhall not be deprived of it under any pretence whatever. But, after you have paſſed the law, how are you to execute it? Who are the perſons entruſted with its execution? The Overſeer: he holds your law in utter contempt and deriſion, while he profits by the breach of it. He treats

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the victims of his power with cruelty, and he knows he cannot be puniſhed for it; becauſe it is quite impoſſible to puniſh any man for any crime, until you have proved his guilt. But the only witneſſes you have to produce are Slaves, whoſe teſtimony cannot be taken in ſupport of any accuſation againſt a free man. And thus, my Lords, we are placed in a ſituation where, of neceſſity, we muſt ſubmit to the perpetration of many acts of cruelty in our name; and the poor negroes are put in a condition wherein it is impoſſible for them to have any protection againſt inhumanity.

Having ſtated theſe matters, I hope I may now be permitted to conclude, that no man will attempt to ſay that the Slave Trade is not repugnant to the principles of humanity. Why then, my Lords, is it, or is it not, repugnant to the principles of juſtice? As I have ſaid already, I have no idea of any thing being juſt, which is inhuman. What ideas have we of juſtice? There is a juſtice in ſociety, adminiſtered by the poſitive regulations of that ſociety, which is the meaſure of action in a ſocial ſtate, and the guide of the conduct of one man towards another, in that ſtate. But we have, beſides, a general idea of juſtice in the abſtract, and independent of any ſocial compact: a juſtice which we owe to each other, not as citizens of a community, but as beings of one common nature; that is, general juſtice from man to man. And, by that juſtice, it is moſt clear, that the labour of one man ſhould not be forced from him wholly for the benefit of another. It is moſt manifeſtly unjuſt, that a man ſhould be made to labour, during the whole of his life; and yet have no benefit, whatever, from that labour. That never can be the caſe in a ſtate of nature, and never ſhould be ſo, in a ſtate of ſociety; for a ſtate of ſociety ſhould be an improvement upon, not a degradation of, a ſtate of nature; and by the rights of nature, prior to all law, prior to all human inſtitution, every human being is entitled to the fruit of his own labour. The origin of all law for the protection of property is founded upon this principle. But in this traffick, as well as in our ſyſtem of colonial bondage, there is an abſolute repugnance to that principle. The African Slave Trade is, in

its very commencement, contrary, not only to our general ideas of common juſtice from man to man, in a ſtate of nature; but directly contrary to the principles of diſtributive juſtice in a ſtate of ſociety: and thoſe who are the advocates of this Trade, cannot defend it without overturning the principle on which the very extenſive property of this country is ſecured to its owners. And therefore when they ſay to us, "It is very true we take multitudes "of negroes from the coaſt of Africa, and take them to "the Weſt Indies, and make ſlaves of them for life; but "conſider what a large portion of property is embarked "in this Traffick, and depending on its continuance;" what does it all prove, admitting it to be true? What but this, that their wealth is their reproach, in exact proportion to its quantity, becauſe it has all been gained by injuſtice; for I will challenge any man to deny that the Slave Trade is contrary to all principles of juſtice, natural or diſtributive. In a ſtate of nature, man has a right to the fruit of his own labour abſolutely to himſelf; and one of the main purpoſes for which he enters into a ſtate of ſociety, is to be better protected, than he can be in a ſtate of nature, in the poſſeſſion of his property. But theſe helpleſs negroes have nothing, but injury in the firſt inſtance, and ſuffering in the ſecond. As between man and man therefore, ſocial or ſavage, the African Slave Trade is founded on the eſſence of injuſtice. Whatever benefit is derived from that Trade to any individual, or to any body of individuals, that benefit is derived from diſhonour and diſhoneſty. When you employ others and pay them for their labour; profit upon that labour, to the amount of the difference between the value of the thing you give, and the thing you take, is juſtly your own property, but this can never be the caſe when applied to any thing which you take by *force*, even though you ſhould pay for it to any amount whatever; becauſe force changes the character of the thing. If they were voluntary labourers, however inadequate the payment they received might be to the value of their labour, ſtill, it might be founded on a contract which is binding on men in a ſtate of ſociety, unleſs founded on fraud or deceit. But here the whole ſyſtem is unjuſt, becauſe founded on compulſion

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on your part. You force from them that which they wiſh not to give you, and you give to them that which you in vain attempt to ſhew is an equivalent to the thing you take, it being a thing for which there is no equivalent; and which, if you did not obtain by force, you would not poſſeſs at all. Nor is it poſſible to debate this point with even the ſemblance of reaſon, unleſs you could prove that it has pleaſed God to give, to the inhabitants of Great Britain, a property in the liberty and life of the inhabitants of Africa. And I would aſk the advocates of this Traffick, in what book, human or divine, am I to read; in what principle of ethicks am I to find; or by what rule of reaſoning can I ſay, that you, the inhabitants of the iſland of Great Britain, are born with a right to buy and ſell the fleſh and blood of human beings? I do ſay that no man can take this view of the ſubject, and contend that this Traffick is not founded on real injuſtice, on that which nothing can change into juſtice, under any circumſtances of human life. But it is neceſſary to go further, and to remind your Lordſhips of ſome other matters in this Traffick—to expoſe ſome of the enormities of it, which go beyond the principles of bare injuſtice. Without injuſtice, the Trade could not be carried on at all, but it does not ſtop there; for not only are the negroes taken in a way which nothing can juſtify; but that taking is accompanied with cruelty, and the moſt ſhocking outrages to humanity. If others had a right to ſell, you would have no right to buy them: you would have no right to take them by force. If they were brought to your ſhips, you would have no right to carry them againſt their will. If they were brought to you in a way leſs barbarous than they are, ſtill you would have no right to act as you do towards them; ſtill your conduct would be unjuſt. And you ſhould remember that you are a powerful nation, and in proportion to your power, you owe benevolence to all men. But what ſhall I ſay of you, if inſtead of being benevolent, you are unmerciful, and abuſe your power; if you commit acts of ſuch inhumanity, that they cannot, with any propriety of language, be called by any other name than *murder*; for what is it but murder, to purſue a practice which produces death, untimely

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death, to thouſands and tens of thouſands of innocent and helpleſs human beings? It is a duty which you owe to your Creator, as you hope for mercy, to abſtain from theſe horrid acts.

My Lords; as I know and feel this Traffick to be ſo abominable an outrage to juſtice and humanity, it is difficult for me to bring my mind to the conſideration of the remaining premiſes which I laid down at the commencement of my addreſs to your Lordſhips.

My Lords; I know, and I am glad to know, that the happineſs of man is conſtituted by the right uſe of his power; and I know too, that it never can be politick for a nation to be unjuſt. If at any time, it forſakes humanity or juſtice, its conduct is, to that extent, impolitick. But, my Lords, I am willing to deſcend from theſe general obſervations, and to argue this point upon its own particular circumſtances. I ſay that however inhuman or unjuſt this practice may be, I will, to accommodate thoſe who know how to prefer their pecuniary profit to humanity and juſtice conſent, for the preſent, to give up the argument, if they ſhew me that this Traffick is, in itſelf, profitable in a general view, to this country. Thoſe who like to continue cruelties for pecuniary gain, muſt admit this to be a very unobjectionable mode of diſcuſſing the ſubject. I ſay that the policy of this Trade, in the abſence of all conſiderations of juſtice, is no longer left a queſtion even upon the ſcore of commercial profit. If it were, I would ſay experience would help us to a concluſion upon it by comparing the labour of a Slave to that of a Free man. The labour of a Slave never can be equally valuable with the labour of a Free man. Such is the character of man that freedom is eſſential to him even in his toil, and when he labours for his own advantage, his labour is more profitable to his employer than when he does it in a ſtate of Slavery.

My Lords, on a former occaſion, a great man (Mr. PITT) now no more, whoſe loſs this country, on many accounts, has much reaſon to lament, and as much on the preſent occaſion as any, for whom I had an unfeigned eſteem both in public and in private life, exerted his great powers on many ſubjects to the admiration of his hearers,

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but on none was the diſplay of his brilliant talents more ſucceſsful than on the ſubject of the Abolition of the Slave Trade. In every opportunity which he took to exert his eloquence, he made manifeſt to his auditors, the abſolute impolicy as well as the inhumanity and injuſtice, of that traffick. He proved moſt inconteſtably, that after making allowance for the price paid for the Slaves originally, the contingencies of the traffick afterwards, the expence of carrying them, the loſs on their paſſage, the expence of maintaining them in the Weſt Indies, and comparing theſe with the amount, in value, of the labour performed by thoſe who were thus imported, the evils endured by the victims of the traffick were no gain to the maſter in whoſe ſervice they took place. My Lords, all the evils of this traffick have not yet, perhaps, been correctly enumerated, for it is clear that, ſome of the diſeaſes of the Iſlands are to be attributed to this traffick, that is, to the purchaſe of negroes on the Coaſt of Africa, who bring with them thoſe diſeaſes. My Lords, here alſo I muſt obſerve that I am not quoting the opinions of the enemies of the Trade, as evidence upon this ſubject: but I take my account of this point, from a book of deciſive authority, the Hiſtory of Jamaica, written by a perſon (Mr. Long) connected with the moſt conſiderable family, and one of the moſt conſiderable proprietors, as well as one of the beſt informed men, in that iſland: and in that book, it is laid down as his opinion, that the beſt way to ſecure the intereſt of the planters againſt approaching ruin, would be to do that to which the propoſition now before us leads: To aboliſh the importation of Slaves from the Coaſt of Africa, not for humanity, or upon any conſiderations of juſtice, but upon the ground of policy, and to prevent the ruin of thoſe iſlands.

My Lords, I would not trouble your Lordſhips with entering into calculations upon the ſubject of this traffick, although I have certainly gone through them for my own ſatisfaction, but I ſhall only ſtate to the Houſe what I underſtand to be notorious in thoſe iſlands, that when any proprietor of negroes is in diſtreſs for debt, and ſeeks to remedy his inconveniences by increaſing the number and the labour of his Slaves, both of which he conceives may help

help him, the meaſure invariably tends to his deſtruction. Now, my Lords, if that be attended with deſtruction to the individual planter, what is the importation but a ſyſtem tending to the general ruin of the iſlands; for how could it have that effect on the individual, if its ultimate operation were profitable?

But the difficulties which have been ſo often ſtated, as to the Abolition of the African Importation, have ariſen from this; they who are the Friends of the Trade, without regard to the ultimate total ruin of the iſlands, ſay that without a freſh importation, the population upon the iſlands cannot be kept up. Now, my Lords, it appears from the moſt accurate calculations, and by correct information laid before the Houſe, that although it is, true, generally ſpeaking, that the number of Slaves in the iſlands, does not keep up itſelf, yet the reaſon is, that a large portion of them is imported every year, and all thoſe of the freſh importation, are much more ſubject to mortality than others who have been long on the iſland, and who are ſeaſoned to the climate, and inured to the labour. The calculation of the mortality in the Weſt Indies ſhould not be made upon an inqueſt reſpecting the freſh importation, but reſpecting the negroes who were either born in the iſlands, or thoſe who have been long imported. On that inqueſt alone ſhould you calculate the mortality of the negroes in the Weſt Indies.

Now, my Lords, having been made acquainted with a great deal of the inhumanity which attends this Slavery in the Weſt Indies, and for which there is no remedy but by preventing freſh importation, I fear it is too much to ſay that under the exiſting degree of miſery the population will greatly increaſe. I am afraid, my Lords, that under ſuch a ſyſtem, population can never flouriſh to any great extent; for I do not believe that human nature is calculated to bear, (without relaxation) toil ſuch as theſe victims are doomed to, and, under ſuch miſery, to multiply their ſpecies much. But I believe there is no inſtance whatever, in the hiſtory of man, in which it has been found that, excepting the devaſtations of war, the human ſpecies has not increaſed; and therefore theſe poor Slaves, wretched as they are, would increaſe

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in population, with a little better treatment, although labouring under the torrid zone; for it is not uncongenial to their conſtitutions; and they do ſo every where elſe. I ſay then, my Lords, this is a matter of account. It may not be proved by the account which the friends of the traffick give; but it would be proved if the account was fairly taken, that is, if the mortality were calculated on the Slaves who were born, or who had been a long time in the iſlands, inſtead of mixing with it, as they do, that of the new importation. Neither ſhould the calculation be confined to any ſingle period; becauſe if you take it on one iſland, or indeed on all your iſlands, at any one period, they will be found liable to accidental circumſtances, which would diſturb the fair average. But if you take it neither on one iſland nor one year, but on the whole of the iſlands, upon an average of years which may embrace a ſufficient portion of the hiſtory of the Weſt India Iſlands, and take it alſo on thoſe who were either born, or had been a long time in the iſlands, ſo as to be conſidered in the light of natives; you will then find that the population is not only kept up, but is increaſed. And what is it that has prevented the increaſe from being ſtill greater? What but too much labour and ſeverity? Too much labour, too little compaſſion, and inſufficient food, will always prevent the human ſpecies from multiplying, as they otherwiſe would in the order of nature.

My Lords, if it be true that the labour of a Free man is cheaper than the labour of a Slave, and alſo, that the labour of a long employed Slave is cheaper than that of a freſh imported one; and if it be true alſo, that the chances of mortality are much more numerous among the newly imported negroes in the Weſt Indies, than among thoſe of old ſtanding there; propoſitions which I take to be incontrovertibly eſtabliſhed; then it follows as an inevitable conſequence, that, independently of any conſideration whatever but policy itſelf, the Slave Trade is abſolutely impolitick. Thus it ſtands upon fair calculation: but, my Lords, experience gives us more and better information, than any calculation, however accurate, can give. My Lords, almoſt every perſon acquaint-

tomed to obſerve the progreſs of the human judgment, muſt have ſeen how much thoſe who are heated in a diſcuſſion, and warped by their prejudices, in their anxiety to maintain their opinions, are liable to the failure of overlooking not only that which is an anſwer to their arguments, and may ſometimes entirely overturn them; but alſo of overlooking, in many caſes, the true view of their own intereſt. And here, my Lords, I muſt obſerve that I have never been able to view, without aſtoniſhment, the conduct of the Weſt India planters, who look at Saint Domingo, and ſtate it to us, as an inſtance of the danger of attempting the Abolition of the African Slave Trade, when the leſſon is to them; becauſe the continuance of the African importation was one of the great cauſes of the inſurrection and ſubſequent miſeries of that devoted iſland. Continue in the ſame line of conduct, and you muſt, in the courſe of nature, produce the ſame effect, in other iſlands. I aſk your Lordſhips, Whether you can believe that the importation of negroes from the Coaſt of Africa can continue in that courſe of rapid progreſſion of increaſe every year, which took place in Saint Domingo, without producing, in all the Weſt India iſlands, that which happened in that iſland, and of which that rapid importation was notoriouſly one of the moſt efficient cauſes. Therefore, my Lords, to hear the planters urge this matter *againſt* the Abolition of the Slave Trade, which is ſo powerful an argument in ſupport of it, does, certainly, aſtoniſh me; although I am not unaccuſtomed to hear them urge very ill founded arguments, or to ſee them overlook their own intereſt. Why then, I call upon you, my Lords, to ſtep forward, and reſcue theſe men from the danger of their own infatuation; and to provide, not only for their intereſt, but for the intereſt of us all. I call upon you for the ſake of your own character and honour; I call upon you for the ſake of humanity; I call upon you in the ſacred name of juſtice; I recommend to you in the name of ſound policy; if you are deſirous of averting from your Weſt India iſlands the horrors felt by Saint Domingo; if you wiſh to keep what you have, by preventing thoſe *miſguided* people from ruſhing into inevitable ruin, and

with

with it, God knows what calamity to this empire; to aſſent to the Reſolution now before you. I would aſk, how is it poſſible for any unprejudiced man to be ſo blind as not to ſee the reaſon of the calamities to which I have juſt alluded, and that it was owing to the Black population of that iſland? Who can doubt but the ſame cauſes will again produce the ſame effect? You ſhould, certainly, therefore, for their happineſs, as well as for your own tranquillity, endeavour to prevent the occurrence of theſe evils among the negroes; and, for that purpoſe, you ſhould endeavour to keep them in a ſtate of ſubordination. But if they are enemies to your tranquillity, and more formidable, as they muſt be, in proportion to their numbers, I aſk you, how is it poſſible for you to ſuffer the planters to employ millions of Britiſh capital to import freſh ſupplies of what you dread? I ſay, my Lords, if we had nothing elſe to urge than the fate of Saint Domingo to convince the planters, as well as your Lordſhips, of the propriety of aboliſhing this African importation, it ought to be abundantly ſufficient for that purpoſe; and ought to induce the planters, inſtead of oppoſing, to ſeek the Abolition.

But, my Lords, if you conſider this as a meaſure preparatory to the amelioration of the condition of thoſe who are now Slaves, it will be an additional inducement to your adoption of it. I know that the contrary has been ſaid by ſome, but it has been by thoſe who took a miſerable view of the noble ancient fabrick called our Conſtitution; and for this I appeal to the hiſtory of this country, which, in very early times, to be ſure, exhibits inſtances of internal Slavery, exiſting to a conſiderable extent. But you will find, even in thoſe times, that preciſely in proportion as that Slavery was ameliorated, did the power and proſperity of the country increaſe and flouriſh. This is founded upon a ſettled law of our nature; for all the inhabitants of a country are more uſeful to it, in a free than in an enſlaved ſtate; and ſo we find, that as the condition of Slaves and of the loweſt perſons in ſociety, was improved, ſo in proportion the country grew more proſperous. My Lords, in the ſame manner, I know that after theſe evils have been ſuffered to continue to this

dreadful and moſt enormous extent, you muſt, of neceſſity, for the happineſs, and even the ſafety of thoſe who are the greateſt ſufferers under them, continue them for a time in the ſame ſtate in which they are at preſent, a ſtate in which you do not wiſh to ſee them. The amelioration of the negroes in the Weſt Indies muſt, certainly, be gradual; and, before the bleſſing of freedom can be a bleſſing to them, they muſt be much improved. But, my Lords, when the African importation ceaſes, it will become inſtantly the intereſt of every individual, concerned in Slaves in the Weſt Indies, to ameliorate their condition. If you ſtop the miſchief of the importation of Slaves, the evils which are dreaded, and others that ought to be dreaded, but which are not, at preſent, ſufficiently thought of by the planters, may be averted. But if you do not ſtop the importation of negroes from Africa, it will be impoſſible; for it will be afterwards proceeding againſt the ſtream, in which the more you ſtrive the weaker you will become, and the power againſt you will accumulate in ſtrength, in proportion as you weaken.

My Lords, on all public grounds, not on motives of juſtice, which are imperative; not on motives of humanity, which are unanſwerable; but on a conviction of direct and immediate policy, you ſhould now ſay, my Lords, that the Houſe of Commons are perfectly right in the declaration they have made, and ſubmitted to you, "That the African Slave Trade is contrary to juſtice, "humanity, and ſound policy."

Now, my Lords; if it be true, and true it moſt indubitably is, that the Slave Trade is not only impolitick and unjuſt but alſo inhuman, you yourſelves ought to take meaſures for its Abolition, even if you had received no reſolution to that effect from the Houſe of Commons. I am convinced that that which is inhuman ought not, under any pretence, to be ſuffered to exiſt, no, not for an hour, my Lords. That however, is a point on which I wiſh not to be peremptory, but ſhould be glad to make way for the opinion of others; but then, I muſt ſay, that I think it ought to be ſtopt as ſpeedily as poſſible, becauſe the miſchief will continue to operate ſo long as you ſuffer the *Trade itſelf* to continue, which is the cauſe of all the

miſchief.

miſchief. But I do not aſk of you to aboliſh it immediately: I only aſk of you to declare that you will proceed to aboliſh it with all practical expedition, in ſuch manner, and at ſuch period, as may be deemed moſt adviſeable. Here, therefore, I call not only on thoſe who agree with me that it ought to be aboliſhed immediately, but alſo on thoſe who do not agree with me in that particular; but who think it ought to be aboliſhed at ſome diſtant day: for nobody will ſay it ſhould never be aboliſhed; I believe there is no man in England who will ſay that, if the Slave Trade did not exiſt, it ought now to be inſtituted. I call, I ſay, on all of your Lordſhips, to agree in this Reſolution, which ſtates neither the time nor manner of the Abolition, but declares that meaſures ſhall be taken for that purpoſe at ſuch a time, and in ſuch a manner, as may be deemed adviſeable.

I know there are many who think that what I have ſaid of the Weſt Indies, and of the Slave Trade, is true. But then, they ſay, that although the evil be as great as any man can conceive, and although it be neceſſary, ſome how or other, to eraſe the evil, yet they think it ſhould not be done quickly. Now, my Lords, with reſpect to the continuance of the Trade, I ſee nothing in the Trade, that not only without detriment, but with good, might not be immediately aboliſhed. I ſee nothing of advantage to the intereſts of this country, nor of loſs to individuals, by the immediate Abolition of this Trade. I ſee nothing of advantage to them in its being aboliſhed gradually, inſtead of immediately. But, my Lords, as there are many who think otherwiſe, all I propoſe to your Lordſhips, for the preſent, is only that you ſhould declare, what I think no man can deny, "That the African Slave Trade is con-" trary to juſtice, humanity and ſound policy;" and alſo to declare, in addition to that truth, that you will proceed to the Abolition of that Traffick, at ſuch a period, and in ſuch a manner, as may be deemed adviſeable. I am ſanguine enough to believe that if your Lordſhips turn your minds to a cloſe and attentive conſideration of this ſubject, I ſhould be able to perſuade you, to aſſent, if not to the immediate Abolition, which I ſhould hope, yet certainly to its Abolition at a time very limited indeed;

and

and that you would immediately declare the time within which it muſt be aboliſhed. I wiſh it to be conſidered whether the Trade cannot be aboliſhed otherwiſe than gradually; or whether your Lordſhips ſhall find that you muſt, from motives of ſafety, or from ſomething in the nature of the Trade itſelf, proceed to aboliſh it gradually only. I am ſanguine enough to believe that the meaſure for the Abolition need not be gradual. But, my Lords, that is a queſtion which cannot be decided in one night. I do not aſk you ſo to decide it. But I do aſk you to decide that whenever you think you can aboliſh it, you will aboliſh it, and that you will proceed to take meaſures for that purpoſe. I am ſure that every night's diſcuſſion of this ſubject is attended with advantage to the cauſe of Abolition. I wiſh therefore, by this declaration, to hold your Lordſhips to be committed to enquire into the ſubject; not to aſſent to any thing you do not approve, but only to declare that you will conſider the ſubject with a determination to take from yourſelves the odium of being, as you now are, if not the authors, yet the abettors and continuers of this moſt odious Traffick. There can be no diſcuſſion on the ſubject now, whether the Abolition ſhould be gradual or immediate. I will merely ſtate that nothing would perfectly ſatisfy my mind, as being agreeable to juſtice, to humanity, and to ſound policy, but the forbidding, immediately after this Reſolution paſſes, the carrying of one African more in a Britiſh ſhip from his native land. Such is my opinion, my Lords. I do not aſk you to be of that opinion, I only ſtate it as my own. My Lords, I now move the Reſolution which has been already read.

Lord HAWKESBURY.—My Lords, I agree that there are two queſtions now before your Lordſhips. Firſt, whether the Reſolution now propoſed be true? Secondly, whether, if true, it be expedient and deſirable to come to ſuch a Reſolution as the preſent, preparatory to the end propoſed? What I have to offer on this ſubject, will not lead me to go into much length, but I think it neceſſary to ſay ſomething, generally, on the different grounds which have been brought forward to induce your Lordſhips

ſhips to agree in this propoſition. I do not think it neceſſary, for my own part, to make any diſtinction between the grounds of juſtice and humanity, and that of ſound policy; becauſe if it be a duty which you owe to juſtice and humanity, to aboliſh the African Slave Trade, you muſt aboliſh it. The queſtion, in that caſe, is at an end; and I would ſay in the name of thoſe who think with me, I do not diſcuſs the queſtion on the ground of juſtice and humanity, as contradiſtinguiſhed from ſound policy. If it can fairly be made out, that the African Slave Trade is contrary to juſtice and humanity, *cadit queſtio*, it muſt be aboliſhed; we muſt not continue that which is unjuſt and inhuman. But, my Lords, the more this queſtion has been diſcuſſed, the more have I been impreſſed, and ſtill more from the conduct of the Noble Baron, and thoſe who urge the Abolition of this Trade, that they urge it on principles which they themſelves feel it impoſſible to ſupport, when they conſider all the circumſtances which attend this ſubject.

My Lords, if the queſtion be ſtated as a general abſtract queſtion, comparing a ſtate of ſlavery with a ſtate of civil liberty, no doubt can exiſt as to which of them is preferable. But you cannot ſay, that becauſe there may be a great and undoubted evil ſubſiſting, therefore you ſhould remove it; for it may be comparatively a leſſer evil, than that which would accompany your attempt to remove it. You are not, in practical ſubjects, to take it for granted, that whatever is an evil ought to be removed, merely becauſe it is an evil; and therefore you ought not to conclude that the Slave Trade, if it be an evil, ought, therefore, to be aboliſhed; much leſs ſhould you ſay it ſhall be aboliſhed immediately and without qualification; becauſe in all political conſiderations, we muſt not look at abſtract propriety, but practical effect. I feel it neceſſary to preſs this conſideration on your Lordſhips minds, becauſe although the Noble Baron came to this at the concluſion of his ſpeech, yet in the earlier part he argued againſt it; for he commenced with maintaining that ſlavery was an evil, and that, upon principles which might have been followed up with a Reſolution, that we ſhould not only have no continuance of the African Slave Trade,

but

but of ſlavery either. But the Noble Baron, on the contrary, admitted that great as he conſiders the evils of ſlavery, he is not ready to propoſe its Abolition. I ſay, therefore, on the admiſſion of the Noble Baron, it is not doing enough to prove that the Slave Trade is an evil, in order to make you aboliſh it; becauſe ſlavery is an evil, and the Noble Baron admits that ſlavery is a thing which, at preſent at leaſt, you cannot aboliſh. Here my Lords, I muſt recur to what has been often ſtated, that ſlavery, though an evil, is a thing which has exiſted in the world from the earlieſt period of its hiſtory downward; and there is no period in which there has been no ſlavery or Slave Trade. When, therefore, it is propoſed to aboliſh and get rid of that evil, it is the duty of your Lordſhips, not to look at the means of accompliſhing the end merely, but at what are likely to be the practical conſequences of its accompliſhment.

The Noble Baron ſays, that this meaſure divides itſelf into different parts; one with regard to the Colonies, and the other with regard to the Coaſt of Africa. My Lords, with regard to the ſtate of the negroes on the Coaſt of Africa, I ſhall only obſerve, that a ſtate of ſlavery exiſted there from the earlieſt times, and its continuance has not been, in any degree, occaſioned by the Slave Trade: whether aggravated by it or not, is another queſtion. Slavery has ſubſiſted in Africa long before our Colonies were eſtabliſhed: and when you conſider how far the Abolition of the Slave Trade, by the other European powers, is likely to be effected by our aboliſhing it, and how little you may change the condition of the negroes for the better; you may, perhaps, be led to doubt the utility of what is now propoſed to you. I take my thoughts upon this part of the ſubject from thoſe who have qualified themſelves to form the beſt opinions upon it. From all that I collect from Mungo Parke, and others, who have viſited that country, it ſeems to be his, and their opinion, that the Abolition of the Slave Trade, and above all, the ſudden Abolition of it, would not be productive of good effects to the inhabitants of that continent.

My Lords, we know that a ſtate of ſlavery exiſted once over the greateſt part, if not the whole of Europe. Fortunately

fortunately for us that ſtate is now at an end. But how? By act of Parliament? By law? No, my Lords, but by that which will effect the Abolition of ſlavery every where, the progreſs of civilization; and it may be matter of uſeful contemplation for thoſe who conſider moral cauſes and effects, whether an act of Parliament, prematurely adopted, may not be the means of retarding inſtead of accelerating the object you have in view? Whether, when you paſs a law to bring perſons farther forward in ſociety than they are fit to be, you do not, in reality, throw them back, and thereby increaſe the evil intended to be diminiſhed? My Lords, I therefore certainly am not prepared to ſay to you, that the operation of the Abolition of the Slave Trade will be as favourable as it is expected to be; on the contrary, all experience leads me to an oppoſite concluſion. I mean that it will be productive to ſociety, to government, and to individuals, of more evil than good.

My Lord, with reſpect to the mode of the tranſit of negroes from the Coaſt of Africa to the Weſt Indies, I ſhould agree, moſt heartily, to every propoſition which ſhould tend to its improvement; but, my Lords, looking on this as a practical queſtion, we are bound to conſider, not whether the African Slave Trade be an evil, but what would be the practical effect of the Abolition of it? If that effect ſhould be, that not a ſlave leſs would be brought from the Continent of Africa, in conſequence of your Abolition: if the effect of it ſhould be to throw Britiſh capital into other countries inſtead of employing it among ourſelves; to enrich the colonies of others while your own are impoveriſhed: then I ſay it will be the duty of this Houſe to negative the queſtion of the Abolition of the African Slave Trade.

Having ſhewn what is likely to be the effect of this Reſolution, the queſtion becomes material for your conſideration on the grounds of juſtice and humanity: for if the effect of this meaſure ſhould be to draw from the Coaſt of Africa not a ſingle negro leſs than is taken at preſent, but to transfer the Trade to Foreign Powers, who will carry it on with much leſs attention to the principles of humanity than we beſtow upon it, while it will be

aided by Britiſh capital, without confining the profits of that capital to Britiſh ſubjects; then I ſay, that I am by no means prepared to aſſent to this propoſition, on the ſcore of juſtice or humanity, or to ſay that I ſhall be prepared, at any time, to aſſent to ſuch a propoſition as this, ſince I fear that evil inſtead of good would be the conſequence of it at any time. If the Slave Trade is an evil, ſlavery itſelf is an evil alſo, and therefore I ſay that the reaſoning which applies to the African Slave Trade, muſt apply to ſlavery in the Weſt Indies; for whatever difference you may chuſe to make in the practical application of the principle, that principle, in the abſtract, applies alike to both; but if you put it on the iſſue of a practical queſtion only, then I ſay that neither ought to be aboliſhed.

My Lords, the Noble Baron touched on ſome points which he thought ſhould operate as an inducement with your Lordſhips to adopt this Reſolution from the fear of danger to your Colonies: I allude to what has happened in St. Domingo. I however, my Lords, have not the good fortune to concur in opinion with the Noble Baron upon that ſubject; for I do think that if ever there was any reaſon againſt the Reſolution now before us, the ſtate of St. Domingo is the ſtrongeſt that could poſſibly be urged againſt it. Whatever may be the horrors of the preſent ſtate of St. Domingo, it is all the effect of abſtract reſolutions which paſſed in the mother country, reſolutions the moſt miſchievous that ever deluded the human mind. If, therefore, there were no other reaſon againſt this Reſolution, but the ſtate of St. Domingo; that, of itſelf, would be abundantly ſufficient to call upon your Lordſhips to give it your decided negative.

The Noble Baron has ſtated, that the effect of this Reſolution and the ſyſtem by which it is to be followed up, namely, the Abolition of the African Slave Trade, will be the improvement of the Weſt India Colonies, and particularly the ſtate of the negroes there. My Lords, I am very far from thinking ſo. I agree with the Noble Baron that all meaſures tending to the furtherance of juſtice and humanity, tend alſo to the happineſs of mankind by improving their condition; but I think that the

diſcuſſion

diſcuſſion of theſe queſtions has retarded the progreſs of that improvement. From the beginning of the diſcuſſion of this ſubject, I have thought that you are taking upon you that which is in the hands of parties over whom you have no efficient controul, and who could accompliſh the end you aim at, although you cannot, I mean by inſtitutions to better the condition and improve the minds of the negroes. My feelings have always led me to wiſh not that you ſhould attempt to aboliſh the Slave Trade, or ſlavery either, in the firſt inſtance; but that you ſhould act upon a ſyſtem which cannot fail to improve the minds of men, as we have done in this country, and as has been done in other countries, and then, in the Weſt Indies, and in Africa, the effect will be the ſame as has been felt in every other part of the world where that improvement has taken place. The Abolition both of the Slave Trade and of ſlavery will be the effect of that improvement, and I verily believe there is no other remedy for either. For how has ſlavery been aboliſhed? It has been aboliſhed, not by an act of Parliament, but by moral improvement which prepared men's minds for it. Any haſty adoption of a legiſlative meaſure, without that preparation, never can have the deſired effect.

My Lords, I now come to the queſtion of the Reſolution itſelf, and I confeſs that I cannot help objecting to it as a reſolution, independent of the objection I have to the ſyſtem to which it leads. Why, my Lords, when this Reſolution ſhall be carried, you will be no nearer your point than you are now. This Reſolution will not only not aboliſh the Slave Trade, but will not even point out any meaſure whatever to be adopted for its Abolition. That muſt be the ſubject of another inquiry. Is there any thing then gained when the reſolution is agreed to? Have you not the whole queſtion to diſcuſs again? Are not theſe abſtract reſolutions in themſelves objectionable? When no object can be gained by this Reſolution, I do not ſee the uſe of agreeing to it. My Lords, when a meaſure is brought forward, with thoſe qualifications and reſtrictions which either the Noble Baron, or any other perſon, may think proper to propoſe, we may then either adopt or reject them altogether, or agree to ſuch

of them as may appear to be moſt proper. But to enter into a reſolution againſt a Trade, which has now been uniformly acted upon for a century and an half, before you ſee your way to a practical concluſion, is a thing which, I own, appears to me extraordinary. My Lords, do I aſk too much of you, when I aſk that your Lordſhips would pauſe upon ſuch a momentous ſubject as this?

The Biſhop of LONDON—My Lords, I ſhould think it a dereliction of duty, if I did not give all the ſupport which my feeble powers will enable me to give to this Reſolution now before the Houſe; a Reſolution of, perhaps, the firſt importance that ever came before your Lordſhips, involving, as it does a queſtion on the iſſue of which depends the happineſs or miſery, and that for future ages, of an immenſe number of innocent and unoffending people.

My Lords, I was extremely glad to hear from the Noble Lord who has juſt ſat down, that the whole of this queſtion turned on the truth of the premiſes; that if the truth of the premiſes was proved, namely, "That "the African Slave Trade is contrary to juſtice and hu"manity; *cadit queſtio.*" I ſhould have expected therefore, that the Noble Lord would have ſhewn that the African Slave Trade was not contrary to the principles of juſtice, was not contrary to the principles of humanity, before he undertook to contend that it was not contrary to the principles of ſound policy. I do not recollect, my Lords, that he advanced any argument whatever to ſhew that the premiſes, ſtated as the baſis of this Reſolution, are not true. Now, my Lords, if the Noble Lord has not denied the truth of the premiſes; I will go a little further, if he has not proved the reverſe of theſe premiſes to be true; then we muſt purſue the courſe recommended to us by the Noble Lord who opened this Debate with ſuch admirable ability. I would firſt call the attention of your Lordſhips to the nature of this Trade on the Coaſt of Africa; and, for that purpoſe, it is neceſſary to inquire in what manner the negroes are taken on the Coaſt. Your Lordſhips know in what mode they are made Slaves: Firſt, by kidnapping; next, by *means of* pretended crimes; and, laſt of all, by the

means of the breaking up of villages, and being taken in war. Now, my Lords, with regard to the firſt, I leave it to your Lordſhips to ſay whether there is any humanity in the practice. If you examine the ſubject, you will alſo find that a great number of thoſe who are ſold as delinquents are accuſed and condemned, often falſely, but almoſt always for the moſt trivial offences; and for theſe crimes, the chief of which is witchcraft, innumerable families, (the mother and her children) have been ſold for Slaves. And it is proved, inconteſtibly, by evidence, that a great part of thoſe who are called delinquents, are accuſed for the very purpoſe of making them Slaves. It is needleſs therefore to ſay that many thouſands of them are falſely accuſed and condemned. The remaining mode of making Slaves is by means of war, and village-breaking. I will ſtate to your Lordſhips, on theſe heads, but a few extracts from the evidence examined before the Committee of Privy Council, on the ſubject of the Slave Trade, and alſo from thoſe who have given their teſtimony before this ſubject was agitated.

[Here the Learned and Reverend Prelate read a variety of extracts from the evidence taken before the Privy Council, and from different authors who had given an account of what they themſelves had witneſſed, tending to ſhew that wars are often carried on in Africa, for the ſole purpſe of making the priſoners Slaves: and alſo that not only convicts are puniſhed by being ſold to ſlavery, but that often their whole families, including their children, ſhare the ſame fate, on account of the ſuppoſed crime of a ſingle individual.]

Theſe authorities could be multiplied without end. Now, my Lords, is it not clearly made out that the averment of this Reſolution is true, "That the African Slave "Trade is contrary to the principles of juſtice, humanity, "and alſo of found policy?" The Slave Trade is moreover contrary to the principles of the religion which we all profeſs. I think it not ſuperfluous to ſay this, becauſe it has been undertaken to be proved that the Slave Trade is not only conformable to natural religion, but alſo countenanced by the doctrines of the Chriſtian religion, which, I think, is one of the greateſt libels that ever was publiſhed

liſhed againſt that religion. That Slavery was permitted, that is, not forbidden, under the Chriſtian religion, is perfectly true; but what has this to do with the African Slave Trade? Nothing, nor with Slavery in the Weſt Indies. But with regard to Slavery, there was no ſuch thing as perpetual Slavery under either the Old or the New Teſtament. With reſpect to that of the Jews: their Slaves were of two kinds, thoſe of their own, and thoſe of neighbouring nations. With regard to the firſt, it was an expreſs command that all Hebrew Slaves ſhould be ſet free on the 7th year: and with regard to all the reſt of whatever nation, it was a command that all the inhabitants of the land, without diſtinction, ſhould be ſet free at the Jubilee, which was the 50th year.

But, my Lords, it is ſaid, "that our Saviour did not "forbid Slavery:" That was becauſe he did not interfere with civil inſtitutions, but left it to the ſpirit of his religion to correct their evils. He inculcated obedience to ruling powers on earth, without reference to any inſtitution; therefore you find no command of His, for or againſt Slavery: but the ſpirit and principle of the Chriſtian religion is againſt Slavery of every kind, and moſt pointedly againſt that ſpecies of it which ariſes from the Slave Trade on the Coaſt of Africa; for Saint Paul ſays,

"——that the law is not made for a righteous man, "but for the lawleſs and diſobedient, for the ungodly and "for ſinners, for unholy and profane, for murderers of "fathers, and murderers of mothers, for manſlayers"—

And he proceeds——

"——for *men-ſtealers*, for liars, for perjured per-"ſons"—, and, "if there be any other thing that is con-"trary to ſound doctrine."

So that you ſee, my Lords, in what light the Slave Trade was conſidered by the Apoſtle. The dealers in it are called ανθρωποδισται, that is, my Lords, "Stealers "of men," the ſame as thoſe whom we now call Slave Traders.

My Lords, I beg leave to obſerve upon what has been ſtated by the Noble Lord concerning Slavery, that it has *ſubſiſted from* the earlieſt ages of the world down to the preſent

preſent period; and he added ſomething as if he conſidered that we have now hardly any right to meddle with it, becauſe the policy of the Trade has been recognized by the legiſlature. My Lords, I ſhould be glad to know if this Trade has been, at any time, the ſubject of regulation by the Legiſlature, why it may not again be the ſubject of regulation, or Abolition by the Legiſlature? And why the Legiſlature can be conſidered to have power at one time which it has not at another time? Indeed, my Lords, it does ſeem to me, that this mode of defending, or rather of attempting to juſtify, evils, becauſe they exiſt, and have long exiſted, would prevent for ever the removal of any evil in this world. It would, for inſtance, juſtify the practice of the Chineſe, who have, for many hundred years, been in the habit of expoſing their infants in the ſtreets to periſh. No leſs than nine thouſand of them in a year are thus inhumanly deſtroyed in the ſtreets of *Pekin*. [He might have added, "There are men whoſe "*profeſſion* it is to kill children by deſire of parents," &c.] However inhuman theſe things are, we know them to ſubſiſt. But, my Lords, is that any juſtification of their inhumanity? To tell us that evils have long exiſted in the world is no excuſe to us for the continuance of thoſe evils which it is in our power to remove. But to come nearer to ourſelves. You know that the practice of piracy has been in exiſtence longer than the Slave Trade; and that practice has not only been permitted, but ſanctioned by the Government whoſe ſubjects practiſe it; and this has been in uſe for four or five hundred years; and I do not ſee why that practice may not be as well defended as the Slave Trade, on the ground of the length of time during which it has ſubſiſted; for, in point of juſtice, they are equal to each other.

But it is ſaid there is, in truth, no inhumanity in the African Slave Trade, for that, practically ſpeaking, we are doing the Slaves on the Coaſt of Africa a great kindneſs by taking them from an infinitely worſe condition than that in which we place them. My Lords, what right have we to inſiſt upon making a man happier than he chuſes to be. We all know they do not deſire it; and here I would refer to a paſſage in Mr. Long's Hiſtory

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of Jamaica, wherein he ſtates that the idea of ſlavery which they have in Africa is totally different from that dreadful ſtate which they find it in the Weſt Indies.

It is ſaid we ſave the negroes from death by buying them on their own Coaſt and carrying them to our plantations. Now, my Lords, ſuppoſing that to be the caſe, I think you give them no bleſſing by it; becauſe I think that perpetual ſlavery is worſe than death. Beſides, you expoſe them to greater riſks of death than they can be expoſed to in their own country. And here I beg leave to refer to the report of the Iſland of Jamaica in the year 1788, by which it appears that a great number of them die before they come on ſhore, and Mr. Long ſtates that one-third of them die in the ſeaſoning; beſides which they are afterwards ſubjected to cruelties which occaſion death, in a manner which is not to be equalled either in their own or in any other country on the face of the globe.

But it is ſaid, that we ſhall have to encounter great loſſes, and that private individuals will ſuffer moſt materially in their fortunes, if the Slave Trade ſhould be aboliſhed. But, my Lords, nothing of this kind is proved. On the contrary I underſtand from thoſe who are beſt qualified to form a correct opinion upon the ſubject, that the Weſt India Proprietors will be conſiderable gainers by it. Mr. Long, among others, is clearly of this opinion.

As to what is ſtated by the opponents of the Abolition, it may be regarded as matter of courſe, for there is hardly a meaſure which comes before this Houſe which is not oppoſed in the ſame manner, and which, if you believe its opponents, will not ruin this country, or at leaſt, ruin ſome particular branch of trade; and yet, after paſſing it, we have ſeen that very trade go on as well as ever, and in many inſtances, a great deal better. In the year 1783, it was ſtated in debates in this and the other Houſe of Parliament, that the peace would be the ruin of this country; that its commerce would be annihilated, becauſe we had loſt the brighteſt jewel in the crown. Twenty-three years have now elapſed, and we know that, under the protection of Providence, this country has been upheld, and we have gone on in a courſe very different from

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that prediction. We know that this country is not ruined—we know that this country has not been annihilated in its commerce, and that if we have loſt one jewel out of the Britiſh crown, we have gained many advantages of much greater value by the vaſt increaſe of our commerce. Nor will the Weſt Indies be any more ruined by the Abolition of the Slave Trade, than this country was ruined by peace with America.

I have only to intreat your Lordſhips to weigh, very ſeriouſly, what infinite evil you will be the abetters of; what an infinite number of unoffending people you will doom to miſery for ages, if you reject this Reſolution.

My Lords, if the Slave Trade be ſuch as I have endeavoured to prove it, and as the Reſolution ſtates, "contrary to the principles of juſtice, humanity, and ſound "policy," and I have not yet heard a ſingle argument to prove that it is not unjuſt, inhuman, and impolitick; and ſhould your Lordſhips refuſe to ſanction this Reſolution, you will eſtabliſh this principle, "That although in"dividuals may not rob and murder, to gain money, yet "that nations may; and may purſue any ſyſtem however "unjuſt or inhuman it may be in principle:—That al"though individuals incur the penalties of death by ſuch "practices, yet that large bodies of men may do them "with impunity for the purpoſes of lucre; and that for "ſuch purpoſes ſuch practices are not only to be per"mitted, but encouraged." I never can perſuade myſelf to think that you, my Lords, will, by your vote to-night ſay there never ſhall be an end to the wretchedneſs of Africa; that miſery ſhall be continued there; that thouſands, and tens of thouſands ſhall be condemned to ſlavery for the moſt trivial crimes, men, women and children—whole families—for the fault of one, and poſſibly that one the victim of falſe accuſation; that whole villages, ſhall be given up to rapine, and the inhabitants delivered up to perpetual ſlavery; themſelves and families for ever?—I never can perſuade myſelf that your Lordſhips will ſay that the whole Continent of Africa ſhall continue for ages to be what Mr. Bryan Edwards ſays it now is, "A field "of warfare and deſolation; a wilderneſs in which the

" inhabitants devour one another; a ſcene of blood, " rapine, and murder."

My Lords, all the inhabitants of Africa not only appeal to your compaſſion, but demand juſtice of you, and I am confident that a Britiſh Houſe of Lords will not refuſe that demand.

The Lord CHANCELLOR.—My Lords, I have no difficulty in ſaying to your Lordſhips that I am very little ſatisfied with my conduct for many years paſt with reference to the ſubject now before the Houſe; for during the time I was a Member of a Britiſh Houſe of Parliament, I ſpeak with contrition when I ſay it, I never was within the walls of that Houſe, when that great queſtion, ſo intereſting to juſtice and to humanity, was agitated. That Houſe, however, did not content itſelf with ſtating the Slave Trade to be contrary to juſtice, to religion and humanity, but alſo went into evidence as it reſpected both the African Slave Trade, and that of the Weſt Indies, the whole of which was afterwards laid before the two Houſes of Parliament.

My Lords, perhaps the reading of that evidence might have made an unfavourable impreſſion upon the minds of ſome perſons, and it does appear to me that ſome portion of that evidence is ſubject to exception. My Lords, I have been in the Weſt Indies and have been an eye witneſs to much of the treatment of the negroes there; and, notwithſtanding what has been ſaid on that ſubject, I am bound to ſay, that the negroes were well treated where I had an opportunity of ſeeing them. At the ſame time, if any cruelties are exerciſed over the negroes in the plantations, God forbid I ſhould attempt to defend the practice. But, my Lords, were we to look only to the Weſt Indies, we ſhould be miſled as to the nature of the African Slave Trade, the great evils of which are in another quarter. Of theſe I have alſo been an eye witneſs, and I now advert to them with contrition, on account of my never having taken a part before in the diſcuſſion of this ſubject; for there are ſome cruelties in this Traffick which no human imagination can aggravate, the ſight of which is enough to rend the human heart. Many of them

them I have ſeen: I have been an eye-witneſs to tranſactions over the whole Coaſt of Africa, of which, if your Lordſhips had but a ſudden glimpſe, they would excite your horror, and you would feel aſtoniſhment that they could have exiſted for a moment. Then, my Lords, what will you ſay to their continuance year after year, and from age to age?

My Lords, I have not been in the internal parts of Africa, but I believe what is related of them by men whom I know to be impartial, and diligent in their inquiries. From them I find that parents are torn from their children; children torn from their parents; huſbands torn from their wives; wives from their huſbands; all ties of blood and affection (for negroes have affections as well as ourſelves,) torn up by the roots. My Lords, I have myſelf ſeen theſe unhappy creatures put together in heaps in the hold of a ſhip, which, with every poſſible attention to their accommodation, muſt ſtill be intolerable; and I have heard proved, in courts of juſtice, facts ſtill more dreadful, if poſſible, than thoſe which I have ſeen. Caſes have occurred in which theſe victims of miſery have been made frantick, and have ſought death by violence, riſing up in rebellion, and endeavouring to break the chains by which they were faſtened to one another; and then have enſued ſcenes the bare ſtatement of which is a diſgrace to a Britiſh Court of Juſtice; not to thoſe who adminiſter juſtice, for they are bound to adminiſter juſtice according to the rules of law; but to thoſe who have the power of preventing, and who ought to prevent a repetition of the miſery, by putting an end to the practice by which it is produced. I allude to a caſe well known to my Noble and Learned Friend (Lord ELLENBOROUGH,) upon a policy of inſurance in which it became neceſſary to defend the Underwriter from the effect of his inſurance; for he had undertaken, by his policy, only to indemnify the aſſured in the uſual way, againſt the perils of the ſea. The negroes on board the ſhip, the cargo of which was thus inſured, roſe in a maſs to deſtroy the Captain and his crew in order to liberate themſelves; and having advanced in purſuit of their object, it became neceſſary to repel them by force as well to ſave

their own lives, or as many of them as could be ſaved, as the lives of the crew. Some of them yielded; ſome of them were killed in the ſcuffle. But many of them actually jumped into the ſea, and were drowned, thus preferring death to the miſery they felt on board; while others hung to the ſhip repenting of their raſhneſs, bewailing with frightful noiſes, their horrid fate. Thus the whole ſhip exhibited nothing but one hideous ſcene of wretchedneſs. Thoſe who were ſubdued into obedience, and ſecured in chains, were ſeized with flux, which carried off many. Theſe things were proved on trial by a Britiſh Jury, which had to conſider whether this was a loſs which fell within the policy of inſurance, the negroes being regarded as if they had been only a cargo of dead matter. My Lords, many inſtances might alſo be given of mortality on board ſhips in this Traffick, where the voyage having been unuſually protracted, famine has viſited the ſhip; and death has kept pretty even pace with the ſhort allowance. My Lords, theſe are ſcenes much too ſhocking to be deſcribed: and I aſk your Lordſhips, is it poſſible that you ſhould voluntarily aſſent to the continuance of ſo much miſery, which you have the power of preventing; or that you ſhould deem this Traffick conſiſtent with humanity or juſtice? No, my Lords, it is impoſſible.

It has been ſaid that this Trade has always ſubſiſted, and therefore muſt be endured. My Lords, I know that great evils have exiſted from age to age in this world, but I know too that many of them have been remedied by the progreſs of civilization: and is it not our duty, my Lords, to do every thing in our power to remove them? Should we not, my Lords, exult in the conſideration that we, the inhabitants of a ſmall iſland, at the extremity of the globe, almoſt at its north pole, are become the morning ſtar to enlighten the nations of the earth, and conduct them out of the ſhades of darkneſs into the realms of light, thus exhibiting to an aſtoniſhed and admiring world the bleſſings of a free conſtitution? Should we neglect a duty of ſuch importance, which we owe to our own character, as well as to the happineſs of ſo large a portion of the human race; and that at a time when we know we

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can, with facility, perform that duty?—My Lords, I cannot believe your Lordſhips will ſuffer to eſcape from you an opportunity ſo glorious.

But, my Lords, it is ſaid we ſhall greatly ſuffer if this Trade ſhould be aboliſhed. My Lords, we ſhall not ſuffer; for, believe me, our duty and our intereſt are in this inſtance inſeparable: indeed I believe them to be ſo, if not always, yet much oftener than ſordid minds will allow. I ſay, my Lords, that our intereſt and our duty are inſeparable here. There was a day when I doubted the policy of going to the full extent of what is now profeſſed to be in view, being at that time perſuaded that you could not, without great injury to your colonies, ſuddenly aboliſh this Trade. But you are in a very different ſituation now. The colonies might then have alleged that they had been taken by ſurprize; but that cannot be alleged now, for the colonies have had ample time to prepare for that which you are now doing.

The propoſed meaſure, it is ſaid, will affect our general intereſt. I am ſure, my Lords, that can never be the caſe. I have no difficulty in ſaying, in the face of the world, that I am moſt decidedly of opinion that the beſt intereſts of every nation depend on its obſerving, in its acts, the principles of juſtice and humanity and the precepts of the holy religion we profeſs. I ſay this of governments generally, but it applies more emphatically to the government of Great Britain, founded as it is, upon theſe principles and precepts.

My Lords, after all that has been ſaid upon this ſubject, I do not find any thing like an argument againſt the Reſolution which is now before you. All that has been attempted to be proved is, that it is impracticable. It is impoſſible to know that without ſome trial. The preſent Reſolution does not point out the mode in which the Abolition of the Slave Trade is to be effected, but I am convinced that a practical mode may, without much difficulty, be found: and therefore, as a ſtep leading to that deſirable object, I heartily aſſent to the Reſolution now before your Lordſhips.

The Earl of WESTMORELAND—My Lords, the preſent queſtion is not a queſtion merely between the Merchants of Liverpool, and thoſe who wiſh to aboliſh the African Slave Trade; nor a queſtion between the Merchants of England, and the Friends of the Abolition; but it is a queſtion which involves the intereſts and the ſafety of every individual in the Britiſh Empire, whatever his ſituation may be in life: becauſe the defalcation of the Revenue, which would be the reſult of the Abolition, muſt be made up by taxes laid upon them. Nor can I ſeparate from immediate Abolition the Emancipation of all the Negroes in the Weſt Indies.

My Lords, I would aſk you upon what evidence of the neceſſity of the thing, are we now called upon to libel the conduct of our anceſtors, who have, by their actions, ſhewn you that they thought it a wiſe ſyſtem of policy to follow this Trade? I regard the preſent meaſure merely as an attempt to obtain a vote upon an abſtract principle, which though it may appear, upon the face of it, to be theoretically correct, is yet without any practical utility; becauſe you are without the means of carrying it into effect. I ſay that a part of this Reſolution may be true, and part of it may be falſe. The African Slave Trade may be contrary to humanity, and contrary to generoſity too, as well as contrary to juſtice, and yet it may be politick. (Hear! Hear! Hear! from Lord GRENVILLE and ſeveral other Peers) I repeat that I think that this or any other traffick may be conſiſtent with ſound policy, and at the ſame time be conſidered inconſiſtent with juſtice and humanity. I think too it may be inconſiſtent with humanity, without being inconſiſtent with juſtice, for that is the caſe always when you execute a criminal, or when you engage in war.

My Lords, then let us ſee what the Reſolution is. I would aſk, Is this a pledge or not? If it is, I think you ſhould not pledge yourſelves to take away the property of others, without hearing Counſel on their behalf, and hearing what evidence they may have to adduce in ſupport of their caſe. But if this pledge is given, and is afterwards not redeemed, your character will be affected: and your Lordſhips will allow me to ſay, that this is an improper

improper declaration for you to make on this occaſion before you ſee your way before you.

My Lords, can any man tell what effect this meaſure may have on the Colonies, on the Revenue derived from them, and on the Property veſted in them? You are proceeding in the total abſence of evidence on theſe points. And who can tell your Lordſhips, what will be the ſtate of the negroes when this Reſolution ſhall be received in the Colonies?

My Lords, fourteen years ago this queſtion was examined, ſince which nothing has been done upon the ſubject, a fact which ought to ſatisfy us that nothing can ſafely be attempted, in the way of aboliſhing the African Slave Trade.

My Lords, this Reſolution ſtates, that the African Slave Trade is contrary to the principles of juſtice, humanity, and found policy; and theſe are the premiſes which conſtitute the foundation of the Reſolution which follows, expreſſive of your determination to aboliſh this traffick. My Lords, in the firſt place, let us conſider the matter as to juſtice. I conſider juſtice, in this caſe, as governed by the *Jus Gentium*. Let us ſee whether the Slave Trade be inconſiſtent with that or not. I maintain it is not; and I conſider this Reſolution as a libel upon the ancient law of England, and a bill of indictment filed againſt our anceſtors, by whom the Slave Trade was inſtituted. Now, what is the courſe of this traffick? Let us take it up at the beginning, I mean, in Africa. The charge made againſt the traffick is, that of taking men and their families from the Coaſt of Africa, and making Slaves for ever of them in the Weſt Indies. Now, my Lords, it appears to me, that the taking them from the Coaſt of Africa is a trivial offence in compariſon to keeping them in ſlavery for ever, according to the arguments of the Noble Lord who brought this Reſolution forward, which were chiefly directed againſt ſlavery in general: and yet that is the very thing which he propoſes not to be diſcontinued. But if the taking them from the Coaſt of Africa be unjuſt, it muſt be againſt the law of nature and of nations. Now, my Lords, I ſay that the purchaſe of Slaves is not contrary to the law of nations. It is laid

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down by the beſt authorities on the law of nations, that trading by acts of violence, and procuring merchandize by terror, are contrary to the law of nations. But the Slave Trade is a trade with the conſent of the inhabitants of two nations, and procured by no terror, or any act of violence whatever. Now, what is proved by the law of nations? The friends of the Abolition themſelves admit that from the firſt ages of the world ſlavery has exiſted, not only on the Continent of Africa, but over all parts of the habitable globe; in Greece, in Perſia, and alſo among the Romans: and I would compare the ſervile condition of the Slaves in any of theſe ancient States, with the ſervile condition of the negroes now in the Weſt Indies. (Hear! Hear! Hear!) And, my Lords, the nation which, in ancient days, was under the ſpecial care and direction of Providence, admitted of ſlavery; and we find it recorded in Holy Writ,

"Both thy bond-men and thy bond-maids which thou "ſhalt have, ſhall be of the Heathen that are round about "you; of them ſhall ye buy bond-men and bond-"maids" ——

"And ye ſhall take them as an inheritance for your "children after you, to inherit them for a poſſeſſion; "they ſhall be your bondmen for ever."

But a Reverend Prelate has ſtated that they were to be relieved from this ſtate at the end of the 50th year, and his ſtatement was certainly correct in that particular. He was alſo correct in what he quoted from the New Teſtament, which certainly does not forbid ſlavery but the reverſe, by inculcating ſubmiſſion to it; for, in every country where the Chriſtian religion was firſt preached, there exiſted ſlavery; and that which the Reverend Prelate quoted about "the Stealers of Men" was a matter which did not refer to the Chriſtian religion, but it was a mere alluſion to that which was done contrary to a civil compact founded upon municipal authority. But this does not prove that the practice was contrary to the Jus Gentium, which is the only meaſure of juſtice between States. On the contrary, I ſay, it is proved by the Jus Gentium, that the African Slave Trade is not contrary to the principles of *juſtice*.

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As to the queſtion of the practice being contrary to humanity, the Noble and Learned Lord (Lord ERSKINE) who ſpoke with great feeling upon this ſubject, inſiſts it is ſo. But if we, ſitting here as Legiſlators, were to ſet our faces againſt every thing we diſlike, and to make laws to prohibit every thing which appears to us to be inhuman, I am afraid, that through the prevalence of the ſame ſort of eloquence, much of the ſecurity on which our lives and property depend, would be ſhaken if not totally deſtroyed. The queſtion is, not whether there be not ſome evil attending the Slave Trade; but whether, by the meaſure now before your Lordſhips, we ſhall increaſe or diminiſh the quantum of human miſery in the world? That is the true queſtion, and it is a queſtion which we ſhould diſcuſs deliberately, and decide with caution. If you could improve the whole Continent of Africa by this vote, it would be a good meaſure indeed, but that is out of the queſtion. One half of it is made up of ſlaves. Then what will be gained to the cauſe of humanity after you ſhall have agreed to aboliſh the Slave Trade, ſuppoſing you to be able to aboliſh it? I believe that if you were able to carry the queſtion of Abolition to day, not one ſlave leſs would be taken away from the Coaſt of Africa. It has been ſaid that America is about to give up the whole of the Slave Trade. My Lords, I believe that to be, at preſent, no more than a ſpeculation. But ſuppoſe North America ſhould give up this Traffick; do you think, my Lords, that South America will give it up? Do you think the Portugueſe or the Spaniards will give it up? Certainly they will not; therefore every man who looks at the thing muſt plainly ſee, that our giving up this Trade is nothing more than reſigning, into the hands of the Portugueſe and Spaniards, that profit which, at preſent, is our own. My Lords, Have you ſettled with the Emperor of France upon this ſubject? Have you his concurrence? We know, full well, his ſentiments upon it; and we know that he has no notion of an Abolition of the Slave Trade.

The next point which I come to is the policy of the meaſure which is now before us; and here I muſt confeſs that I almoſt tremble at the conſequences of its adoption.

I ſhall not enter into calculations, but I will venture to ſay, that the property connected with this queſtion, and which depends on the wiſe deciſion of it, is not leſs than £100,000,000 of property or very near it. The annual produce of the Iſlands is £18,000,000, and it yields a revenue of £4,000,000; and I deſire that nothing may be done to injure ſuch immenſe property; and, I ſay, it is dangerous to diſcuſs any thing that may have that effect, unleſs you are prepared to come to ſome ſalutary regulation for its protection.

My Lords, let us look at the ſtate of the cultivation of our Iſlands. Many have ſaid and now ſay, that the black population may be kept up in the Iſlands; but moſt of the Planters, who are perſons whom we ſhould ſuppoſe to know that ſubject beſt, are of a different opinion. They tell you, it is impoſſible, not only to improve uncultivated land, but to continue to work that which is already cultivated, without freſh importations of negroes from Africa: ſo far are they from doubling their population in the period which has been ſtated, that they decreaſe. But if you would leave the queſtion alone we ſhould be ſatisfied: we are only ruined by theſe diſcuſſions.

My Lords; I maintain that no caſe has been made out to call for your Lordſhips interference in regard to this Traffick. I object to your entering into it on account of the ſeaſon of the year being an improper one, becauſe you have no time to come to a juſt deciſion upon it; and it is a queſtion the deciſion of which involves the character of Parliament.

My Lords, I have had the misfortune to fall under the diſpleaſure of the Noble Lord oppoſite to me, (Lord GRENVILLE). Let him however take care that his zeal does not tranſport him beyond propriety on this important occaſion; and when I reflect that the wealth and property of individuals and the law of the land, are attempted to be invaded, I muſt be excuſed if I ſpeak boldly when I ſtand up in their defence. I maintain that this meaſure arraigns the wiſdom of the law and the conduct of our anceſtors; of the anceſtors of that Noble Lord, as well as of my own. My Lords; on theſe grounds, I think that this queſtion ſhould not now be put.

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The Biſhop of ST. ASAPH.—My Lords, I cannot but aſſent to every part of the Reſolution now before your Lordſhips at any ſeaſon of the year, or any day of the year, or any hour of the day. My Lords, I conceive that in the diſcuſſion of this ſubject, the merits or rather demerits of Slavery, and of the African Slave Trade, were put diſtinctly and a part from each other, by the Noble Baron who opened this debate, and who propoſed this Reſolution: but by the Noble Earl who ſpoke laſt, they appear to have been blended together, and confounded.

My Lords, when we conſider the Slave Trade, and Slavery, we muſt feel, that by each, though in different degrees of wretchedneſs, a human being is degraded below the proper condition of a man.

My Lords, even if I were to allow that the ſlaves in the Weſt Indies receive, from the liberality of the Planters, all the alleviation which their condition will admit, yet I would ſay that they cannot be otherwiſe than miſerable; for, if you were to pamper them with the moſt exquiſite delicacies, or put them to reſt on "a bed of roſes," a ſlave will be ſtill a ſlave. And yet I am doubtful whether it would be wiſe, politick, or humane, by any legiſlative meaſure, *at once*, *materially*, to alter the ſtate of thoſe who are in that unfortunate condition. But the queſtion is not concerning the alteration of this condition, but whether you ſhall aboliſh the practice by which they are put in that condition. The queſtion now before this Houſe is, Whether it is juſt, humane, or politick, in us ſo to place them? I think that queſtion very eaſily anſwered. My Lords, I find it difficult to form any one notion of humanity, which does not include a deſire of promoting the happineſs of every human creature with whom we come in contact, or whoſe condition, in any degree, depends on us I know of no juſtice which is not founded on that golden rule of ethicks; "to do unto others what "we would they ſhould do unto us." And theſe principles of humanity and juſtice, are ſo clear and abſolute, in my mind, that I find it difficult to make them clearer. Perhaps no difficulty is greater than that of arguing a propoſition which is ſelf evident; and that I take to be

the character of the propoſition that the Slave Trade is unjuſt and inhuman.

My Lords, it has been ſaid that all nations have had ſlaves; that ſlavery has exiſted in one ſhape or another, from the beginning of the world to the preſent day. But, my Lords, although ſlavery may have exiſted, in ſome degree, at all times, in the world; has the Slave Trade always exiſted? Certainly it has not. My Lords, there is no ſort of doubt that ſlavery may have exiſted in various parts of the world from the earlieſt times down to the preſent day, but it was ſlavery of a very different kind from that which attends the African Slave Trade. And when the Noble Lord, who has juſt preceded me in this debate, talks of the ſlavery of Perſia, and of ancient Greece, or of any other part of the world in ancient times, I would venture to aſk him whether he knows, or thinks he can find, in all antiquity; whether in the whole courſe of his reading, however copious it may have been; or in the whole courſe of his reſearch, however profound; any thing reſembling the hardſhips or the cruelties of the African Slave Trade—a practice, founded on an abſolute contempt for the miſery of thoſe who are its objects, by which human beings are tranſported by thouſands from one quarter of the world to the other, with a total diſregard to all the feelings of humanity? My Lords, I deny it, I aver that nothing like the African Slave Trade was ever practiſed in any nation upon the face of the earth at any time.

My Lords, if the practice of the African Slave Trade be repugnant, as I ſay it is, to juſtice and humanity, I own I do not ſee how, without aiding and abetting injuſtice and inhumanity, any man can ſanction it: and as the Noble Earl on the other ſide does not differ from us upon the impropriety of ſupporting injuſtice or of giving countenance to inhumanity; and as another Noble Lord (HAWKESBURY), who diſſents from the Reſolution now before your Lordſhips, has admitted, that if it could be made to appear, that the African Slave Trade is contrary to the principles of juſtice and humanity, the queſtion would be at an end; I do not ſee how they, or either of them, can ſanction the continuance of the African Slave Trade.

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My Lords, I ſhould have had nothing to ſay on that part of the ſubject, had not the Noble Earl attempted to queſtion the application of the doctrine of the New Teſtament to the ſubject before us, as quoted by the Reverend Prelate near me; whoſe ſpeech appeared to me to be a complete anſwer to every thing that has ever been ſaid on the ſubject of the Chriſtian religion being favourable to the continuance of ſlavery in the world. That Reverend Prelate ſtated from the Old Teſtament moſt correctly, that among the Jews, perſons of their own tribes could not be continued in ſlavery longer than ſix years: the ſeventh was their year of releaſe, when the Jews who were in bondage were releaſed. And even ſlaves of other nations, and who were not Jews, were ſet at liberty on the jubilee, which was every fiftieth year.

My Lords, to ſhew how little encouragement the ancient Moſaic law gave to ſlavery, I will refer your Lordſhips to the text,

"*And* if thy brother an Hebrew man, or an Hebrew "woman, be ſold unto thee, and ſerve thee ſix years, "then in the ſeventh year thou ſhalt let him go free from "thee."

"And when thou ſendeſt him out from thee thou "ſhalt not let him go away empty."

"Thou ſhalt furniſh him liberally out of thy flock, and "out of thy floor, and out of thy wine preſs: *of that* "wherewith the Lord thy God hath bleſſed thee thou "ſhalt give unto him."

Thus we ſee what the Hebrew law was concerning Slavery. I do not know that I can immediately find the paſſage; I dare ſay the Noble Earl oppoſite to me can find it for me; but there certainly is a paſſage in the Old Teſtament, in which it appears that the Hebrew law provided for the caſe of a Slave who ſhould become ſo attached to his maſter's family that he ſhould not chooſe to quit him on the year of the releaſe, when he was entitled to his diſcharge by the Hebrew law.

I come now to the manner in which the Hebrew law provided for thoſe Slaves, who were not Jews, and who were enſlaved *for ever*, as it was called.

"And

" And thou ſhalt number ſeven ſabbaths of the year " unto thee, ſeven times ſeven years, and the ſpace of " ſeven ſabbaths of years ſhall be unto thee forty and " nine years.

" Then ſhalt thou cauſe the trumpet of the Jubilee to " ſound on the tenth *day* of the ſeventh month; in the " day of atonement ſhall ye make the trumpet ſound " throughout all your land.

" And ye ſhall hallow the fiftieth year, and pro- " claim liberty through *all* the land, unto all the inhabit- " ants thereof: it ſhall be a Jubilee unto you; and ye " ſhall return every man unto his poſſeſſion, and ye ſhall " return every man into his family."

The Noble Earl quoted a paſſage out of the Old Teſtament, by which he maintains that thoſe of the Heathen who were Slaves ſhould be held in bondage "*for ever.*" If the Noble Earl had continued his ſearch a little further, he would have found, that the words "*for ever,*" are here intended merely to ſignify a long time; for that even this ſentence of ſlavery *for ever* terminated at the year of the Jubilee. So that we find, my Lords, that the principle of perpetual ſlavery is totally inconſiſtent with the Jewiſh law. As to the Chriſtian ſyſtem, it is to be obſerved that Chriſtianity itſelf did not apply to any particular political conſtitution, but may be followed without diſturbing any; for our Saviour's kingdom was not of this world. His doctrine had for its objects the glory of God, and peace on earth and good will to man: and it is calculated to improve the minds and promote the happineſs of the whole human race. But with reſpect to the Slave Trade; to the employment of ſhips to tranſport a vaſt number of human beings from one part of the world to another; it is not countenanced by the doctrine of the Chriſtian religion, and there is no ſuch thing in the ancient Hiſtory of the World, in any part of it, under any circumſtances whatever.

But, my Lords, when we come down to Chriſtianity, we find that dealers in Slaves are held among the worſt of the human race. Dealing in Slaves is held to be an infamous profeſſion. Saint PAUL, in his Epiſtle to TIMOTHY, tells us what the Dealers in Slaves are, and who

are

are their companions. The Slave Dealers are called "Stealers of Men" ανθρωποδισται or ανδραποδισται; and their companions are liars, perjurers, murderers, parricides, and ſodomites. Such is the company in which the Slave Dealers are put, my Lords; and yet this is the authority to which the Noble Earl thinks right to refer for the *defence* of the Slave Trade.

My Lords, the whole of the evidence taken before the Privy Council, taken before the Houſe of Commons, and taken here, I have read; and it is my firm opinion that even policy, ſuppoſing it could be ſeparated from juſtice and humanity, which, I think, it cannot, would require the Abolition of this Traffick. And I am happy that the Noble Lord over the way (Lord HAWKESBURY) declared his ſentiment to be, that if the injuſtice and inhumanity of the Trade could be made out, the queſtion ſhould be at an end, for that which is inhuman and unjuſt, muſt not be defended under any idea of policy; and I would take the liberty of adding, that nothing which is inhuman and unjuſt can ever be politick. But this is not all, for it is further my opinion, that if the African Slave Trade were aboliſhed, the Weſt India Iſlands would be better cultivated than they have ever been; for the Abolition of the African importation will, neceſſarily, as well as naturally, improve the condition of the negroes in the Weſt Indies, and make them more and more to approximate to the condition of Free men; and as they become ſo, the better will the iſlands be cultivated. My Lords, if I am right in regarding this Traffick as unjuſt and inhuman, the opening of freſh lands cannot be admitted as a reaſon for the continuance of the African Slave Trade; for you cannot be allowed to manure your land with the carcaſes of the poor and helpleſs Africans. As to the abſtract principles which were, for a while, cheriſhed in France, and which the Noble Lord oppoſite to me ſeems to think were the cauſe of inſurrection in Saint Domingo; they might have had the effect of unſettling ſome men's minds; but they could never have had the effect which was produced in Saint Domingo, if it had not been for the vaſt proportion of the black population of that iſland, which was occaſioned by the importations from Africa.

My

My Lords, on theſe grounds I do entirely and moſt heartily concur in every part of this Reſolution. Indeed I cannot ſee how this queſtion can be debated; for you cannot heſitate to ſay that injuſtice is injuſtice, and that inhumanity is inhumanity.

The Earl of SUFFOLK ſupported the Reſolution. His Lordſhip denied the propoſition that the Iſlands could not be cultivated without freſh importations of negroes. The Noble Earl was confident that the population of all the Iſlands would be ſufficient and could be eaſily kept up by good treatment, ſo as to be abundantly ſufficient for the cultivation of the Colonies; and entered into a detail of calculations from the year 1772 downward in ſupport of that ſtatement. He was further of opinion, that the miſeries of the Iſland of St. Domingo were owing to the vaſt importation of ſlaves. The Noble Earl was ſo firmly convinced of the inhumanity and injuſtice of the African Slave Trade, and of the propriety of this Reſolution, that if any action of his life ſhould be recorded, he ſhould be glad that the vote he ſhould give on this occaſion ſhould have that honour.

Lord HOLLAND.—My Lords, the point before us has been ſo amply diſcuſſed, the evidence on which it reſts has been ſo long in the poſſeſſion, and ſo deeply impreſſed upon the minds of your Lordſhips, and ſo ably enforced upon your recollection this night, by ſeveral Noble Lords, and by the two Reverend and Learned Prelates who have preceded me in this debate, that it would be ſuperfluous in me to enter much at large into the general queſtion of the Slave Trade. I riſe for the purpoſe of making a few obſervations on ſome things which fell from the Noble Earl, and alſo from a Noble Friend of mine, over the way, who treated this as an abſtract queſtion.

The Noble Lord (Lord HAWKESBURY) contends that this is not a proper time for the propoſed Reſolution, although he readily admits, with as much correctneſs of logick, as honourable feeling, that if the practice of the African Slave Trade be unjuſt and inhuman, it muſt be impolitick. The Noble Earl (WESTMORELAND) however,

ever, was of a different opinion, and ſaid that although it be unjuſt and inhuman, it does not follow that it is impolitick. And therefore, he ſays, it may be a queſtion whether you ſhould aboliſh it; even admitting it to be unjuſt and inhuman. But it is ſaid that it is quite improper to urge any deciſion upon a ſubject of this importance in the preſent period of the ſeſſion. Now your Lordſhips will recollect, that whenever your attention is called to any meaſure connected with the African Slave Trade, there are certain Noble Lords, the Noble Earl in particular, who never fail to call for delay. He is now calling for delay, and for an opportunity of hearing further evidence, although we have abundant evidence upon that ſubject. But the Noble Earl does not care what the evidence ſays on either ſide. He will maintain, I am ſure he will, that the African Slave Trade ought never to be aboliſhed. He will think nothing of what any man may ſay, or what any number of men may ſay, except what they do ſay is not at variance with his own opinion. The argument againſt the Reſolution amounts to this, that, however abhorrent to our nature the African Slave Trade may be; although we are all agreed that the Traffick is unjuſt and inhuman; yet your Lordſhips ought not to expreſs that which is already on the Journals of another Houſe of Parliament, and engraven on the heart of almoſt every man in this country, namely, that the African Slave Trade is an unjuſt and inhuman Trade, a Trade which I ſay we are bound in duty to aboliſh, leaving the mode of that Abolition to future diſcuſſion and inquiry, merely becauſe a Bill has not been brought in for its Abolition.

My Lords, the Noble Earl took a diſtinction between juſtice, humanity, and ſound policy. There are men who may be diſpoſed to affirm that that which is unjuſt may nevertheleſs be politick; though God forbid that we ſhould ever admit ſuch diſtinctions in this country. But the Noble Earl goes farther, and ſays that a thing may be inhuman and yet not unjuſt; and he puts the caſe of the execution of a criminal as a proof of it. My Lords, this is really confounding all notions of right and wrong in human inſtitutions, and breaking down the barriers and undoing the ties by which ſociety is held together, for

the execution of a criminal is what humanity itſelf may call for no leſs than juſtice; becauſe the execution of an atrocious criminal, a murderer for example, may be, and very often is, humanity to the reſt of the community in which we live. Therefore, when a criminal is juſtly executed, the execution is, properly ſpeaking, both juſt and humane, juſtice to the individual who ſuffers, and humanity to the great body of the people, and particularly as it operates to prevent crimes. The ſafety of the whole community is intereſted in the execution of a criminal.

But it is ſaid, that if our object be to prevent human miſery, we ſhall not accompliſh it by the meaſure now before us; and the Noble Earl threw out a hint that all we are now doing will end in nothing, for that other nations will not join us, nor follow our example. My Lords, I do not pretend to know what other nations will do; but this I do know, that it is not for us to continue to act with injuſtice and inhumanity, becauſe other nations may refuſe to diſcontinue their injuſtice and inhumanity. It is not for me to ſay I will continue to act unjuſtly and inhumanly, towards the inhabitants of Africa, becauſe I cannot prevent others from being unjuſt and inhuman towards them. That the iniquity of others is any juſtification of mine, is a principle which can never receive the ſanction of this Houſe, becauſe it is repugnant to the principles of common ſenſe, and is a propoſition at which the feelings of every honeſt Engliſhman muſt revolt. But, my Lords, are we ſure that others would take it up? or if they did, at all events much of the evil would be diminiſhed, becauſe they cannot carry it on to any thing like the extent which we do.

But the Noble Earl aſks my Noble Friend who brought this Reſolution forward, why don't you emancipate the Slaves in the Weſt Indies, as well as aboliſh the Trade from the Coaſt of Africa; for your argument is all againſt ſlavery in general? My Lords, my Noble Friend who opened this debate, cannot be miſunderſtood upon that ſubject, becauſe he ſpoke upon it quite diſtinctly, and very clearly. He ſtated that it would be quite impoſſible to emancipate the Slaves in the Weſt Indies, for the preſent, becauſe they are quite incapable of receiving free-

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dom in their preſent ſtate, although that may, and probably, will be, the ultimate effect of the Abolition. I ſay that, at preſent, the negroes in the Weſt Indies, are incapable of receiving emancipation. I ſay that, at preſent you cannot make any regulation upon that ſubject; poſſibly it may never become neceſſary for you to make any. But I ſay alſo, that it is impoſſible for you to conſent that the African Slave Trade ſhall be continued, merely becauſe the effect of the Abolition may ultimately be, that of the emancipation of the Slaves in the Weſt Indies.

But the Noble Lord has ſaid, that all the planters are againſt the Abolition of the African Slave Trade, and, that without their conſent, you never can accompliſh it. Now, my Lords, the fact will not bear the Noble Lord out in that aſſertion; for it is very far from being the conviction of all who have conſiderable property in that country, that the continuance of the African importation is neceſſary. It certainly is not mine, although I have become poſſeſſed of conſiderable property in that part of the world. Peculiar hardſhips are the neceſſary effect of every new importation of negroes, for they are more untractable than thoſe who have long been on the iſlands. If you ſtop theſe freſh ſupplies from Africa, you can abate the rigour of the treatment of the Slaves you have, and it will become the intereſt of their maſters to treat them kindly. You will then place the proprietor in a ſituation in which it is deſirable he ſhould be placed, a ſituation wherein it is his intereſt to improve the minds of his Slaves; and then, I am convinced, that the progreſs of civilization will be ſuch as to put an end, in time, to the whole evil.

But, the Noble Earl has aſked, what would be the effect of attempting to aboliſh the Slave Trade, againſt the opinion of all the planters? He ſays they are all of opinion that the cultivation cannot be carried on without freſh importation. I beg leave to differ from him upon the fact. I believe, my Lords, that experience does not bear him out in that aſſertion. There is one iſland in the Weſt Indies, into which no Slaves whatever are imported. I believe that ſome are even exported from Antigua, and few or no Slaves have been imported into it for many

years. As to Jamaica, although, in one year, 15,000 died in conſequence of a famine occaſioned by hurricanes, notwithſtanding all the diſadvantages of the bad ſyſtem which is followed there, the exceſs of deaths during the twenty years preceding 1788 was over the births only one per cent. Deducting, however, the mortality of the newly imported Slaves, and taking the calculation upon the negroes born in the iſland, or thoſe who had been long there, the mortality was conſiderably leſs than one per cent. I ſay, then, I have a right to argue, that the negroes, with good treatment, would not only maintain, but increaſe the population, if there were no freſh importation from the Coaſt of Africa. When I hear, therefore, Weſt India planters affirm, that they are not able to keep up the population of Slaves in the Weſt Indies, without freſh importation from Africa, I know that the aſſertion ariſes from a ſuperficial view of the ſubject. The calculation of the mortality is made, including the newly imported negroes. But theſe ſhould not be included in it, when we are conſidering whether the iſlands can keep up their population. I know too, that although it is not the caſe that every planter, any more than any other claſs of men, is deſtitute of feeling for the miſery of others, while he profits by it: yet God knows it is the caſe with too many; and therefore while it is not made the immediate intereſt of the planters to encourage population on the iſlands, as is the caſe at preſent, we ſhall find them care leſs of the means of increaſing that population. But the population would be abundantly ſufficient, under proper treatment, and to this nothing will ſo ſoon conduce as the Abolition of the African Slave Trade. I agree, however, that if all the uncultivated lands in Jamaica are to be brought into cultivation, it is very true that the population in that iſland is not ſufficient. But, my Lords, are we to ſay, that we have a right to rob on the high ſeas, and turn pirates, or executioners for every petty tyrant in Africa, in order that every holder of a bit of land in the iſland of Jamaica may be able to cultivate the whole of his allotment, a work which may require centuries? No, my Lords, no; we ought to be ſatisfied with going on with *that which* is cultivated already; and, therefore, I, for

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one, who am intereſted to a conſiderable extent, in property of this kind in the Weſt Indies, and muſt feel warm wiſhes for its welfare, do ſay, from the firm conviction of my mind, after much reflection, that it is not only the true intereſt of the planters to have the Abolition adopted; but that it is the intereſt of the planters to have that courſe taken, more than it is the intereſt of any other ſet of men.

My Lords, it is proved beyond all doubt, that the new importations of negroes bring with them many evils, and among thoſe evils, diſeaſes which have ravaged the plantations. The ſyſtem by which they are broken in, to perform their labour, is, and neceſſarily is, a ſyſtem of ſtripes, of cruelty, and of complicated hardſhips. Theſe again are calculated to produce rebellion. Thus has it been in Saint Domingo. The horrors in that iſland were chiefly occaſioned by thoſe who had been recently imported into it.

My Lords, for theſe reaſons this Reſolution has my hearty aſſent. I wiſh, moſt heartily, for the total Abolition of the African Slave Trade; becauſe I am convinced in my conſcience, that it is an unjuſt and inhuman traffick, degrading to the character of man, and moſt diſgraceful to the character of the Britiſh nation; and therefore moſt decidedly impolitick for this country to continue. My Lords, that has always been my opinion as an individual member of the community, ever ſince I thought myſelf capable of forming an opinion. That is my opinion now, as a Member of the Britiſh legiſlature. That is my opinion too, as an individual, who happens to have conſiderable perſonal intereſt in property in the Weſt Indies. That is my opinion as an Engliſhman wiſhing for the proſperity of the Britiſh empire. I think there is no way of redeeming the honour of the Britiſh nation; I think there is no way of ſecuring the tranquillity and permanent proſperity of the colonies themſelves; but by the Abolition of the African Slave Trade.

Lord SIDMOUTH.—My Lords, I ſhall detain your Lordſhips but for a very few minutes. If the motion of my Noble Friend had been for the immediate Abolition of

the African Slave Trade, I could not vote for it, although I cordially agree to the *ſubſtance* of this Reſolution. If it were for the immediate Abolition of the Traffick, which I know to be the ardent wiſh of my Noble Friend's heart, I could not accede to it; and I ſhould withhold my aſſent to that propoſition upon preciſely the ſame motive, as that by which my Noble Friend would be actuated in urging it, namely, the true intereſts of juſtice and humanity; becauſe I feel a conviction in my own mind, that ſuch a meaſure would not conduce to the intereſts of juſtice and humanity. Could I feel a conviction that the continuance of the African Slave Trade for an hour, would be really injurious to the cauſe of juſtice and humanity, the queſtion, with me, would be decided, for policy can not be oppoſed to humanity and juſtice. But, my Lords, I have felt for the laſt twenty years, that, with this Traffick are ſo deeply blended the intereſts of this country, and thoſe of numerous individuals, that we ſhould be very cautious how we proceed. It is out of the power of Parliament to get rid of this Traffick with the expedition with which we could wiſh to ſee it extirpated.

My Lords, it is my firm opinion that it is in the Weſt Indies alone the Slave Trade can be aboliſhed; and it is on that account, and on that account only, that I have, hitherto, withheld my acquieſcence to the immediate Abolition of the Slave Trade. When I find a ſufficient increaſe in the black population in the Weſt India Iſlands, to continue the cultivation already eſtabliſhed in the Colonies, then, but not till then, ſhall I agree to an Abolition of the African Slave Trade. I believe, under proper regulations, your black population would admit of a natural increaſe, and I would ſay, by every poſſible means increaſe that population; and I would not, for the ſake even of the augmentation of the revenue, allow the extended cultivation of land in the Weſt Indies, to afford a pretence of bringing an additional negroe from Africa. But, before I can aſſent to the propoſition for the Abolition of the Traffick, as now carried on to continue the cultivation of land already allotted and in uſe in the Weſt Indies, I muſt know more of the effect of the Abolition than has yet been pointed out. I muſt ſee what is

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the real ſituation of the Iſlands. I muſt know what increaſe of population will be ſufficient, and what increaſe of population each Iſland is likely to produce, and when I ſhall find that the population is become ſufficient for the cultivation, as it now ſtands, and there is no longer any doubt of its continuance; then I ſhould ſay the queſtion is decided.

My Lords, I conceive that my Noble Friend, in bringing this queſtion forward, wiſhed to embrace the ſupport of all thoſe who deſire that the Slave Trade ſhould be aboliſhed at all, or in any ſhape; but I am ſorry there are in this motion words which make it impoſſible for me to vote for it. If the words were that Parliament would, in the courſe of its next ſeſſion conſider of the moſt effectual means of effecting the Abolition of the African Slave Trade, I ſhould aſſent to it; but I cannot put on the Journals of this Houſe of Parliament, what my mind does not agree to as a truth, I mean, I cannot aſſent to the propoſition which ſtates, that the Slave Trade is inhuman and unjuſt. Not that it is not inhuman and unjuſt in itſelf; but that comparing it with that which I think would follow its immediate Abolition, it is not inhuman and unjuſt: and I think that the immediate Abolition would place us in a ſtate in which we ſhould, every day afterwards, go further and further from the accompliſhment of that great object which we all aim at, and which humanity and juſtice require. For, my Lords, it is my perſuaſion that if you were even to ſee all the horrors of this Traffick, and at the ſame time you were to ſee the reaſons of it, and you were to look, with attention, at the intereſts of thoſe who are quite as much the objects of your care as the Africans can be; I mean a great number of your own countrymen, I am convinced, my Lords, you would not think that you were ſerving the cauſe of juſtice or humanity by the ſudden Abolition of this Traffick. I wiſh for the Abolition of the Slave Trade; but at the preſent moment, informed as I am, I cannot conſent to the putting of that propoſition on the Journals of an Houſe of Parliament, which ſtates that the African Slave Trade (under all the circumſtances which attend it at the preſent moment) is unjuſt, and inhuman.

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and impolitick. I admit it to be ſo in the abſtract, but, relatively ſpeaking, I think it is not ſo. I therefore cannot aſſent to the words of this Reſolution. It is with extreme regret and pain that I withhold my approbation from the meaſure now before the Houſe. I did the ſame thing, from the ſame conviction, fourteen years ago, in another Houſe of Parliament, in a Committee for conſidering of the moſt effectual means of aboliſhing the Slave Trade.

The Earl of STANHOPE.—I riſe with no intention to detain the Houſe long. That appears to me to be unneceſſary; becauſe the Noble Baron who brought this buſineſs to-night before your Lordſhips, appears to me to have exhauſted the ſubject. I cannot, however, help expreſſing my aſtoniſhment that a perſon of the deſcription of the Noble Viſcount who ſpoke laſt, ſhould hold a propoſition ſo extraordinary, as he has done on this occaſion; confeſſing as he does that the Slave Trade is unjuſt; confeſſing, as he has done, that the Slave Trade is inhuman; and then ſaying it is neither inhuman nor unjuſt to continue that Slave Trade. A more paradoxical, a more whimſical opinion, I believe was never entertained, or more whimſically expreſſed in this Houſe. Let him talk as he pleaſes of the intereſts of the Planters, that is but a part of the conſideration of this ſubject. The people of Africa are not to be forgotten; for when we are talking of juſtice and humanity, they have a claim upon our attention. And what has the Noble Viſcount ſaid of them? Has he ſaid any thing of the cruelty of tearing away with the moſt inhuman violence, from their relatives, women and innocent and helpleſs children? Can the Noble Viſcount maintain that there is any principle of human rectitude that will ſupport ſuch a practice, on account of the pecuniary intereſt which ſome individuals may have in its continuance? I own, my Lords, I do not underſtand the practice of complimenting our Planters in the Weſt Indies with the lives of men, women and helpleſs children, by thouſands, for the ſake of ſupporting the pecuniary intereſt of ſuch Planters; of taking them away by thouſands from the Coaſt of Africa, of killing hundreds

dreds of them in this purſuit, and making ſlaves of the reſt for ever. Can any thing be more horrible to human nature than ſuch a practice? Can any thing in the whole hiſtory of human cruelty be more hateful than the cooly and ſyſtematically taking children, who have never done any harm, from their parents and relations, and treating them as cruelly as if they were the moſt hardened offenders, and enſlaving them for life? Let me tell that Noble Viſcount that he may talk as he pleaſes; but that this is a practice which never can be defended upon any principle, and that to attempt to ſay it is juſt is an inſult on the ſacred name of juſtice. My Lords; I do not pretend to be learned in the Hebrew law; but I think I know enough even of that law, to be quite ſure it countenances nothing like the African Slave Trade, although the Noble Earl attempted to defend it by that law; in which he was moſt compleatly anſwered and refuted by two Reverend Prelates, who have ſpoken in this debate in a manner that has done honour to their heads and hearts. That Noble Earl has aſked us to look at the practical effect of the Abolition of the African Slave Trade. My Lords, I will tell him what will be the practical conſequence of the Abolition of the African Slave Trade. Firſt, it will get rid of the infamous practices which take place in Africa. Secondly, it will put an end to the horrors of the Middle Paſſage. Thirdly, it will prevent multitudes of our fellow beings being ſold like herds of cattle. Fourthly, if there be any ſenſe of ſelf-intereſt in the Planters in the Weſt Indies, a quality for which we ought to give them credit, it will make them treat their ſlaves much better than they do at preſent; and this will immediately tend to the increaſe of population there; for it is well known that in every country, where the people are not ill-treated, population will increaſe, as it has done on the eſtate of Sir Philip Gibbs, who is a humane man. Indeed it is a libel on common ſenſe to ſay that they would not univerſally increaſe, if univerſally well-treated. But while men will be inhuman enough to make cold calculations, whether it be cheaper for them to work the negroes to death, and rely upon a freſh importation of them when the firſt are gone; than to work them moderately, and treat them

kindly; and when they find, or think they find, that cruelty is more profitable to them than kindneſs;—that it is cheaper to them to work one ſet of negroes to death, and import another, than to uſe thoſe they have with humanity; it will be in vain to expect any thing like humanity from the bulk of them; and until the negroes are treated with humanity, the population of them will never increaſe. Now, my Lords, aboliſh the practice of importation, and theſe cruelties will be at an end; for then, ſelf-intereſt will perform the offices of humanity. But it is ſaid that the negroes whom we purchaſe are, many of them, convicts, who, if we did not purchaſe them, would be put to death. My Lords, how can Engliſhmen ſtoop to the baſeneſs; why ſhould a Britiſh Parliament become the hangmen and executioners of the ſentences pronounced on the convicts of the Coaſt of Africa?

My Lords, there is only one thing more which I muſt take notice of. The Noble Baron (HAWKESBURY) called your attention to St. Domingo. The obſervation which the Noble Baron made upon that ſubject was, that all the horrors of that Iſland were the conſequence of ſpeculating principles which were current in France. I ſay the reverſe. They were owing to two cauſes; firſt, the vaſt number of recently imported negroes there, and next, the ſcandalous and infamous breach of faith of the French to their Colonies. They held out, in France, an idea of the Abolition not only of the Slave Trade, but alſo of all Slavery: but they broke their word. They held forth the rights of man to the whole human race, and then, in practice, they moſt infamouſly abandoned every article in thoſe rights, by which they became the contempt and ſcorn of all the enlightened and the virtuous part of mankind. That was the great cauſe of the inſurrection and rebellion of St. Domingo, and not the ſpeculative principles of France.

As to the propoſition now before the Houſe, I thank the Noble Baron for bringing it forwards. I conſider it as laying the foundation of the Abolition of the Slave Trade, and the ſooner that end is accompliſhed the better I ſhall like it.

As to the Abolition of Slavery itſelf; it is a ſubject which

which has nothing to do with the Abolition of the Slave Trade. They are totally diſtinct things; and one of the wiſeſt and beſt heads I ever met with, was of opinion, that firſt you ſhould aboliſh the African Traffick; but that you ſhould take care how you aboliſh ſlavery, unleſs you are prepared to take another ſtep. What is the condition of the farmers of this country? The farmers of England are co-proprietors with the landlords; that is, they live by the produce of the ſoil of the land as well a the owner does by the rent of it. Hence it is that the land is well cultivated in England. Make the negroes in the Weſt Indies co-proprietors in like manner in the land, by making them receive payment for their labour from the produce of the land itſelf; when they are in a ſtate of moral improvement fit to be placed in that condition, you may aboliſh ſlavery altogether with perfect ſafety. Such a meaſure, in due ſeaſon, I ſhould think wiſe and judicious. In that manner you may aboliſh ſlavery altogether, but I ſhould think it a moſt miſchievous meaſure if tried on any other plan.

Lord Viſcount SIDMOUTH—My Lords, I could not have conceived it poſſible, had I not heard it, that I ſhould have been ſo miſconceived, as the Noble Earl, who has juſt ſat down, has miſconceived me. The Noble Earl ſtates me to have oppoſed the intereſts of the Planters in the Weſt Indies to the claims of Africa upon your juſtice and humanity. My Lords, I have never oppoſed the claims of juſtice and humanity from the inhabitants of Africa, by the intereſts of the Planters in the Weſt Indies, or by the intereſts of any individual in that or any other country. I have ſtated an opinion, of which I have not yet been diveſted by all I have heard here to-night, in addition to tho great deal which I have heard elſewhere in the courſe of the laſt twenty years. That opinion is: That the worſt mode of avoiding the horrors, and the moſt likely mode of perpetuating the continuance of the African Slave Trade, would be an abrupt attempt at its total Abolition. I would permit the Slave Trade to continue for a while, in order to mitigate its horrors; that being, as I conceive, the moſt likely way to accelerate its *final Abolition*.

The Earl of GROSVENOR—My Lords, as I wiſh, at this hour, to ſpare your Lordſhip's time as much as poſſible, it is not my intention to deliver more than a ſentence or two. We have met with frequent diſappointments in the purſuit of this ſubject; but I do now entertain an hope, a ſanguine hope, that we ſhall not be diſappointed again. I do hope that His Majeſty's Miniſters are really quite in earneſt, and bent on the Abolition of the African Slave Trade; and that they will, in the next ſeſſion, early in the next ſeſſion, unleſs ſomething which it is at preſent impoſſible to foreſee ſhall prevent them, take this great queſtion up with a determination to go through with it, ſo that another year ſhall not paſs over our heads before we extend the juſtice and humanity of this country to the helpleſs and unhappy inhabitants of Africa.

Earl FITZWILLIAM—My Lords, I wiſh to take notice, very ſhortly, of what has been ſaid to-night on the ſubject of Saint Domingo. I am of opinion that much of the calamities which befel that Iſland aroſe from what happened previouſly in France. My Lords, under theſe circumſtances, I am afraid that what happened in Saint Domingo may happen in the neighbouring iſlands, if the negro population ſhould become turbulent. Therefore with a view not to decide for myſelf, and that the Houſe ſhould not decide for itſelf, haſtily, on this momentous ſubject, I ſhall ſupport the previous queſtion.

Lord ELLENBOROUGH—My Lords, I riſe to offer my ſentiments to your Lordſhips on what I feel to be an important queſtion, and although there be a difference between my Noble Friend, the Noble Viſcount, (SIDMOUTH) and myſelf, yet my mind is made up on this ſubject; and I cannot help ſaying, my Lords, that if, after a pendency of twenty years during which this queſtion has undergone diſcuſſion in the two Houſes of Parliament and with the publick, your Lordſhip's judgments are not ripe for its deciſion now, I cannot look, with any confidence, for any moment in which you will be ready to decide it.

My Lords, the queſtion before us, is a very ſhort, and, to

to me, a very plain one. It is, Whether the African Slave Trade is unjuſt, inhuman, and impolitick? I think if theſe premiſes be true, no expedition that is practicable can be too rapid in bringing it to a concluſion.

My Lords, this is a ſubject which has been very often before me, before I had the honour of a ſeat in this Houſe. My attention has frequently been drawn to an attentive view of it under circumſtances which afforded me correct information; and I am the more anxious, on that account, to deliver the ſentiments I entertain upon the ſubject, as a Peer of Parliament, without reference to any thing I may have been called upon to do in the diſcharge of a profeſſional duty; in which ſituation, in the courſe of many years, this ſubject came often to my view. My Lords, when I look at the mode in which this Traffick commences, by the ſpoliation of the rights of a whole quarter of the globe; by the miſery of whole nations of helpleſs and unfortunate Africans; by tearing them from their homes, from their families and friends; from every connection by which human beings are tied together in ſociety; doomed as they are to live for the remainder of their days in ſlavery in a diſtant land: When I ſee the unfortunate ſubjects of this Traffick carried away by force, thruſt into a dungeon in the hold of a Slave ſhip, in which the interval of their paſſage from their native into a foreign land, where they are doomed to ſlavery for life, is filled up with miſery, and ſuffering, under every degree of debaſement, and in chains: and when they arrive in the Weſt I do not know that their condition is bettered. When I ſee all theſe things; and I cannot look at the African Slave Trade without ſeeing all theſe things, I cannot but contemplate the whole ſyſtem with horror. I believe, indeed, that if theſe unhappy beings could forget every thing of their former ſtate of freedom, they might, by comparing their condition in the Weſt Indies with the horrors of their paſſage, derive ſome conſolation. Yet, my Lords, you muſt all feel how impoſſible it is for the human mind to be prevented from caſting back reflections on its former ſtate, and being moſt deeply affected by the gloomy change. And this greatly aggravates the malignity of their

their bodily diſeaſes, for I am perſuaded that the melancholy into which they are caſt, by reflecting on their ſituation, is one great cauſe of mortality among them. My Lords, inhumanity is at the commencement of this Traffick; inhumanity continues to attend it in the tranſit of its victims; and although ſomewhat leſs rigour attends it in the Weſt Indies than in the two former ſtages, ſtill it is but the continuance of the ſame ſcene of horror; and therefore I have no difficulty in forming my opinion on the firſt branch of the queſtion now before your Lordſhips.

My Lords, the next point is a queſtion of juſtice as between two nations, in the way in which the Noble Earl (WESTMORELAND) viewed it. But although the negroes may be taken in Africa by perſons authorized by the ſtate to take them; although their own ſtate may have a right to diſpoſe of them as convicts; and although the practice may therefore be ſaid to be legal as it reſpects them, yet no man can doubt that the whole of the practice of the Slave Trade, whatever ordinances they may have to ſanction it, is a practice which is radically, eſſentially, and in principle, unjuſt; and therefore there can be no excuſe for us in continuing the Traffick, as was ſtated ſo ably by my Noble Friend who opened this debate.

My Lords, on the general principle of natural juſtice, which, certainly, is paramount to all the ordinances of men, it is quite impoſſible to defend this Traffick; and if you continue it, that continuance is unjuſt and inhuman. And I agree with the Noble Baron (HAWKESBURY) that having decided that the Traffick is unjuſt and inhuman, we ſhould not inquire whether it be impolitick. The inquiry itſelf would involve impiety; for it is the common ordinance of God that that which is inhuman or unjuſt, ſhall never be for the good of man. Therefore, if this Traffick be inhuman or unjuſt, it is needleſs to debate the queſtion whether it be politick; becauſe, according to the principles upon which I think human judgment ſhould be formed, its impolicy is included in its injuſtice and inhumanity. And I have no doubt that when you have aboliſhed the African importation, the planters in the Weſt Indies will gladly introduce a change of *ſyſtem* among the negroes, ſuch as may beſt conduce to the

increaſe

increaſe of the population of their negroes, by encouragement to marriage, leading to the rearing of infants under parental affection, inſtead of magiſterial authority. By rules of this kind, population will neceſſarily increaſe, and we ſhall find that the importation from the Coaſt of Africa will ſoon become unneceſſary. It is proved that this is the caſe in ſome of the iſlands already. I am of opinion that, in the mean time, you ſhould confine this Trade to the ſhips already engaged in it As to the loſſes which the Noble Earl thought ſo alarming, thoſe who ſtate theſe things are ſo much in the habit of making overcharges—not from one cauſe merely, but from ſeveral cauſes, from the purpoſed deception of ſome, and from the incapacity of others—(I have often myſelf given many ſuch ſtatements to the world as I received them from others, in my profeſſional character, when pleading at your Lordſhip's bar for the Merchants of Liverpool) but from information which I poſſeſſed from authentick ſources, I am enabled to ſay, that the 100 millions, to which the Noble Earl alluded as being in danger of being loſt by the Abolition of this Traffick, is a thing quite wild and fanciful. But in the ſhipping there may be ſome loſſes, although they may be brought, at ſome expence, into other trades. I have no deſire to undervalue this loſs, but there can be no difficulty in providing for it. Such a conſideration cannot be allowed to impede our progreſs in getting rid of an horrible injuſtice.

But, my Lords, it is ſaid that when we agree to the Abolition of this Traffick, we ſhall have done but little in the cauſe of humanity, for that when we leave it off, other nations will continue and increaſe it. I do not believe they will; but if they do, I ſhall wiſh them joy of the bleſſings they will thereby ſecure to them and to their poſterity. I know that America is about to give it up. I believe the States of Europe will give it up. But ſuppoſing they all continue it, what is that to us? Would it not rather redound to our honour? would not our virtue be the more ſignal? for then

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found———

As to the queſtion of emancipation, which it is ſuppoſed the

the negroes in our iſlands will attempt to procure, in imitation of thoſe of Saint Domingo, there appears to me no danger to be apprehended on that point. That aroſe from liberty given, or promiſed to be given, and then revoked by a breach of faith, and which has been followed up by too much treachery to gain any further credit.

My Lords, if there be no other nation in the world that is diſpoſed to abandon this Trade, that will not be our fault. We cannot compel others to abandon it; for the ſea is ploughed by others as well as by us; but not to the ſame extent. We can therefore greatly diminiſh, if we cannot totally do away the evil. We ſhall thereby ſet a glorious example to ſurrounding nations. We ſhall ſhew that, while we are ſtanding forward for the rights of civilized nations, in which cauſe we have done much, and are ready to do more if other nations are but true to themſelves:—We ſhall ſhew to an admiring world, that while we have done what depended on us to prevent the ruin and convulſion of Empires, we have not forgotten the intereſts of the helpleſs Africans, to whom we extend the principles of general juſtice and humanity. This will hand down your names with honour to future generations as the authors of a great and ſplendid act of juſtice.

My Lords, I beg pardon for having gone further than perhaps was neceſſary; but being ſatisfied that the African Slave Trade muſt appear to your Lordſhips, as it does to me, upon the moſt firm conviction, to be unjuſt and inhuman, upon all the principles upon which this Houſe can bring itſelf to conſider queſtions of juſtice and humanity; the reſt is abſolutely undeniable; for whatever is unjuſt and inhuman, muſt be impolitick in a ſtate as well in an individual. And after this Reſolution is adopted, I would take the earlieſt practicable period of convincing mankind that we are determined to put this queſtion at eternal reſt by aboliſhing this Traffick for ever.

Earl SPENCER.— My Lords, I ſhall not, at this late hour of the night, enter at large into the general ſubject of the Abolition of the African Slave Trade. I riſe chiefly to take notice of ſome things which fell from a Noble *Viſcount* (SIDMOUTH). He ſeems to think that the Slave

Trade

Trade ſhould be aboliſhed in the Weſt Indies. I think that the object of ameliorating the condition of the negroes in the Weſt Indies, is one which may be effected in the Weſt Indies; but I am certain, that in order to obtain a better condition to the negroes in the Weſt Indies, it is abſolutely neceſſary to put an end to the African Slave Trade; and for that reaſon, I aſſent to this Reſolution. Had the propoſition been to hold out an idea of the emancipation of the negroes in the Weſt Indies at any ſtated period, I am ready to declare that it would not have had my aſſent; for if once they had that proſpect, from our Reſolutions, it would ill become the character of this country to deceive them in their object. It is to that deception that the horrors of St. Domingo are to be attributed, and therefore I agree with my Noble Friend, that this pledge, into which we are about to enter by aſſenting to this Reſolution, does not refer to any queſtion upon the emancipation of ſlaves. I agree with my Noble Friend, it would be an abundantly dangerous propoſition, if it had any ſuch aſpect.

My Lords, I will not enter further into the diſcuſſion of this ſubject for the preſent. I am convinced that the African Slave Trade is what the Reſolution ſtates it to be, unjuſt and inhuman. I agree alſo that it ſhould be put an end to. The mode in which that is to be done, ſhould be one in which individuals ſhould be ſubjected to as little loſs as poſſible, and it ſhould be done as conſiſtently as may be, with general convenience to all parties. But when there are before us ſuch objects as juſtice and humanity, I cannot allow ſmall inconveniencies to ſtand in the way, and prevent us from accompliſhing our objects. On theſe grounds I give the motion my hearty concurrence, truſting it will be followed up with a meaſure for the final Abolition.

Lord GRENVILLE.—My Lords, I feel too highly gratified by the ſupport which I have received this night, to think of ſaying any thing by way of anſwer to what has been urged againſt the Reſolution now before your Lordſhips. I riſe only for the purpoſe of ſaying that I truſt the motion will be carried, and alſo to expreſs, by way of

notice to your Lordſhips, before the queſtion is put, that I mean to follow it up with a proceeding ſimilar to that which has been adopted by the other Houſe of Parliament, viz. an Addreſs to His Majeſty, praying that He will be graciouſly pleaſed to invite other Powers to concert with Great Britain the beſt means for generally aboliſhing the African Slave Trade. I mean, this night, to move a ſimilar Addreſs of this Houſe to His Majeſty, and I am perſuaded there is no one among your Lordſhips, who aſſents to the one, that will diſſent from the other.

The queſtion was then put on the Reſolution, and carried by the following DIVISION:

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The Addreſs to His Majeſty was then moved and carried without a diviſion.

APPENDIX,

CONTAINING

NOTES AND ILLUSTRATIONS.

Page 9, line 4.

Quid eſſet ſi ipſum audiviſſetis!] A full report of two of the ſpeeches of Mr. PITT on the Slave Trade is preſerved in two pamphlets, ſold by *Phillips and Fardon*, George-yard, Lombard-ſtreet; the one entitled, "The Debate on a "Motion for the Abolition of the Slave Trade in the "Houſe of Commons, on the 18th and 19th April, 1791;" the other, "The Debate on a Motion for the Abolition "of the Slave Trade in the Houſe of Commons, on the "2d April, 1792." Both theſe debates are reported in detail, and are highly intereſting. The ſpeeches of Mr. PITT in particular, are models of convincing argumentation and ſplendid eloquence.

Page 11, line 35.

Its exports, independent of the African Slave Trade, are ſuperior to any other port, except that of London, &c.] The authenticity of this ſtatement will not be diſputed. Such then being the extent of the commerce of Liverpool, it will hardly be believed, that the extinction of the

African Slave Trade can affect its prosperity in any material degree. The total value of the exports from Great Britain for the purpose of carrying on this trade, has never amounted, in the course of any one year, to one million of pounds sterling.

Page 12, line 26.

Ships for the Trade, from their peculiar construction, are unfit for any other.] The ships engaged in the African Slave Trade, unless they have been constructed for the very purpose of eluding the humane provisions of the Act for regulating that trade, do not differ from common merchantmen in any other respect than in having a somewhat greater height between their decks. This circumstance would be attended with advantage in the Transport service; and there is scarcely any branch of foreign trade in which it would prove a disadvantage. It is to be recollected that the same ships which convey slaves from Africa to the West Indies, take from this country cargoes of a very miscellaneous nature for the purchase of those slaves, and generally return hither loaded with sugar, coffee, and other articles of West Indian produce. Their peculiar construction is never alleged by the Master or Owner as a reason for refusing the offer of a full freight from the Colonies to Europe.

Page 17, line 31.

The general consent of all the parent states of Europe would effect nothing without the cordial co-operation of the Colonies.] This argument, if valid, would apply with still more force to the commercial intercourse between America and the West Indies, than to the subject under discussion. The restrictions on that intercourse, which many Members of Parliament deem to be so very essential to the prosperity of our trade and navigation, would, on this principle, prove wholly unavailing. For certainly the Colonies were decidedly adverse to any such restrictions; as may be seen both by an address to His Majesty from the Legislature of Jamaica, and by the resolutions of the West India body in London, published in almost all the newspapers.

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Page 17, line 39.

A ſource of traffick which is eſſential to our naval ſtrength.] The following account preſented to the Houſe of Commons in 1790, will ſhew that this Trade inſtead of being a ſource of naval ſtrength is *the grave of our marine.*

Abſtract of ſuch of the Muſter-rolls of Liverpool and Briſtol Slave Ships as were returned into the Cuſtom Houſes there, from September, 1784, to January 5th, 1790.

Periods.	*No. of Veſſels.*	*Original Crews*	*Died of original Crews.*	*Brought Home of Original Crews.*
From 1784 to 1785, - -	74	2915	615	1279
From 1785 to 1786, - -	62	2163	436	944
From 1786 to 1787, - -	66	2136	433	1073
From 1787 to 1788, - -	68	2422	623	1114
From 1788 to Jan. 5, 1790,	80	2627	536	1350
Total -	350	12,263	2643	5760

From this account it appears that more than *one-fifth* of the whole number of ſeamen employed, died during the continuance of the voyage, excluſive of the large proportion, amounting to nearly one-half of the original crews, which appears to have been left behind in the Weſt Indies, many of them, as is ſtated in the evidence, in ſuch a "ſickly," "emaciated," "deſtitute," and even "dying ſtate," as to render it probable that the mortality on the whole was much more conſiderable than has been ſpecified.

It was formerly urged by the enemies of the Abolition, that the Weſt India Trade was as deſtructive to ſeamen as the Slave Trade; but by an account made up for the Houſe of Commons, from the muſter-rolls of Weſt India-

men, it appears that out of 462 veſſels, carrying 7640 ſeamen, only 118 were loſt, or about 1 in 65. (See Abſtract of evidence taken before the Houſe of Commons, p. 100).*

Page 19, line 10.

How much leſs can you accompliſh ſuch an object in the Iſlands, where you will want the aid of the civil authority to counteract the natural intereſts, &c.] One evident advantage which a ſyſtem of prohibition poſſeſſes over a ſyſtem of duties is this, that it does not require, as the latter does, the aid of the civil authority of the Iſlands to enforce it: it will be more ſurely and effectually adminiſtered by our cruizers, without any interference at all on the part of the Iſlands.

Page 24, line 5.

He ſeems to think that there is no mode of aboliſhing this Trade but with the concurrence of the Colonies, &c. if ſo, I am afraid we ſhall never aboliſh it.] In the year 1797, a Committee of Weſt Indian Planters reſolved, that, "for "the joint purpoſes of oppoſing the plan of Mr. WILBER-"FORCE, and eſtabliſhing the character of the Weſt India "Planters, it is eſſential that they ſhould manifeſt their "willingneſs to promote actively the cauſe of the negroes, "by ſuch ſteps as ſhall be conſiſtent with ſafety to the "property of individuals and the general intereſt of the "Colonies;" and they deputed one of their body, Mr. CHARLES ELLIS, to move in Parliament, that an Addreſs be preſented to His Majeſty, requeſting him to recommend to the Colonies the adoption of ſuch meaſures as may promote the increaſe of the negroes, *gradually diminiſh the neceſſity of the Slave Trade, and ultimately lead to its complete termination;* and alſo as may conduce to their moral and religious improvement, and ſecure to them the certain, immediate and active protection of the law. This Addreſs was moved and carried; and was tranſmitted to the Governors of all the Iſlands by the Duke of PORTLAND, accompanied by letters urging the Colonial Legiſlatures to ſecond the wiſhes of the Houſe of Commons. At the ſame time Sir WILLIAM YOUNG, as the organ of the

* The work above referred to may likewiſe be had at PHILLIPS & FARROW'S, George Yard, Lombard Street.

the

Weſt India body, wrote ſecretly to the Preſidents of the different Councils, explaining to them the amicable purpoſe with which this apparently hoſtile meaſure had been propoſed, and aſſuring them that the adoption of ſome legiſlative proviſions relative to the negroes were indiſpenſibly neceſſary; but for what purpoſes neceſſary? To diminiſh and terminate the Slave Trade, as expreſſed in the addreſs? No: but in order "*Not only to ſtop* "*for the preſent, but gradually ſupersede the very pretenſions* "*at a future period to a meaſure of direct Abolition of the* "*Slave Trade by the Mother Country.*" This deep laid ſcheme for preventing, under the avowed purpoſe of promoting, the Abolition, would not have been known to the public, but for the incaution of the lawgivers of ſome of the Iſlands, who, inſtead of keeping the communications of Sir W. YOUNG ſecret, as was obviouſly intended, inſerted them in their minutes, made them the ground of their deliberations, and tranſmitted copies of them interwoven with their other proceedings to His Majeſty, by whom they were afterwards laid on the table of the Houſe of Commons. (Papers on the Slave Trade, preſented 7th May, 1804, under head Leeward Iſlands, p. 58; and St. Vincent's, p. 6.)

It now remains to be ſeen what was the effect which this expedient produced in the minds of the reſident Planters in the Weſt Indies; and whether any hope can thence be drawn of their concurrence in any meaſure which may have for its object the Abolition, however remote, of the African Slave Trade.

The Aſſembly of JAMAICA aſſert, that the right of obtaining labourers from Africa, is ſecured to them under the moſt ſolemn engagements; and that "*they never can* "*give up, or do any act that may render doubtful, this eſſential* "*right.*" (Ib. Jamaica, p. 5.)

The Aſſembly of BARBADOES were ſo far from paying even a decent degree of reſpect to His Majeſty's communications on this ſubject, that when their Governor (Lord SEAFORTH) propoſed to them to make the wilful murder of any perſon, free or ſlave, felony without benefit of clergy, (the fine for that crime being only £11. 4s.) the Aſſembly took "conſiderable offence," and a Committee of the whole Houſe was appointed "to prepare an anſwer

"to

" to the Governor's meſſage, an anſwer moderate and " reſpectful, but calculated to repel inſult, and evince " that the Houſe underſtands its intereſts and aſſerts its " rights." (Ib. Barbadoes, p. 6.)

The General Council and General Aſſembly of all the LEEWARD ISLANDS ſtate, " that the right of procuring " labourers from Africa has been ſecured to us by repeated " Acts of Parliament, &c. We, therefore, never can " abandon it, or do any thing that may render doubtful " this eſſential right." (Ib. Leeward Iſlands, p. 8.)

But although it would appear from theſe documents, that no hope can be entertained of obtaining the concurrence of the Iſlands in any meaſures of amelioration, *with a view* to the Abolition of the Slave Trade; yet may not the ameliorating meaſures which they have been induced to purſue, produce ultimately that effect? It is granted that the Colonial Legiſlatures have amended in ſome points their code of Slave Laws; but it is ſcarcely neceſſary to diſcuſs the probable effect of theſe amendments; as it appears, from documents laid on the table of the Houſe of Commons, that the laws made expreſsly for the encouragement and protection of the ſlaves, have proved a dead letter: nay that they were nothing more than a blind intended to conceal from the eyes of the Britiſh public the enormity of our Weſt Indian ſyſtem; and that it was never in the contemplation of the lawgivers themſelves that theſe laws ſhould be enforced. In October, 1804, Earl CAMDEN wrote to the Governors of the different Iſlands, requiring information as to the mode in which the Slave Laws had been executed. To this application no anſwer appears to have been returned by the Governor either of Jamaica or the Bahamas. From thoſe of the Leeward Iſlands, St. Vincent and Grenada, letters have been received ſtating the difficulty of complying with the requiſitions of Earl CAMDEN, but promiſing to take meaſures for procuring the deſired information. * The Legiſlature of Barbadoes had paſſed no ameliorating acts, and there-

* It muſt be obvious that a very ſhort delay would have been ſufficient for anſwering Lord CAMDEN's enquiries, as far as they relate to the execution of the Slave Laws. The Governor, by referring to the Secretary of the Iſland, or to the Clerks of the ſeveral Courts of Record, could have aſcertained the requiſite facts with very little trouble.

fore

fore could not be expected to make any return to the enquiry. From Dominica alone has any satisfactory information been procured. The Governor of that Island, Governor PREVOST, thus writes to Earl CAMDEN. "From "the many years I have passed in the West Indies, and "as a resident in most of the Colonies, I may venture to "represent to your Lordship the Legislature of the Island "of Dominica as distinguished by the laws it has passed "for the encouragement, protection and goverment of "Slaves; but *I am sorry I cannot add that they are as re-*"*ligiously enforced as you could wish;* however, the treat-"ment of negroes depends less on the temper of the "Master, *whose interest in his Slaves well-being is not always* "*a sufficient check.*" "The Act of the Legislature, in-"titled, 'An Act for the encouragement, protection and "better government of Slaves,' *appears to have been con-*"*sidered, from the day it was passed until this hour, as a* "*political measure to avert the interference of the Mother* "*Country in the management of Slaves.* Having said this, "your Lordship will not be surprised to learn, *the Clause* "*7th of that Bill has been wholly neglected.*" The Clause which has thus been wholly neglected was enacted for the express purpose of securing, as far as possible, "the good treatment of the slaves, and ascertaining the cause of their decrease."

Clauses 3 and 4 of the same Act were framed for the avowed purpose of "promoting the religious and moral improvement of the slaves." Of these clauses it is likewise stated both by Governor PREVOST and the Rev. Mr. AUDAIN, that "they are not carried into effect;" and it appears that not one penalty has been enforced for their non-execution. (See for the above particulars, papers respecting the Slave Trade, presented to the House of Commons 25th February, 1805).

After this, can any reasonable expectation be formed of the concurrence of the Colonial Legislatures in any plan for terminating or even diminishing the Slave Trade?

Page 25, line 23.

The repeated discussions of this subject in this House—are extremely dangerous.] This is an argument which can

 have

have no weight, when it is known that in the Royal Gazette of Jamaica, the official newſpaper of the Iſland, not only are the debates in Parliament on the ſubject of the Slave Trade (and the late debates among the reſt,*) minutely detailed; but reports of their Colonial Aſſembly are inſerted, pointing out the dangers of inſurrection, and ſtating the facilities which inſurgents would find in that Iſland. After this it is a mere mockery to talk of danger from debating the queſtion of the Slave Trade in Parliament. The truth is, that whatever language it may be found convenient to employ on this ſubject in a Britiſh aſſembly, it is a fact known and acted upon in the Weſt Indies, that the ſlaves are ſo ſunk and degraded in the ſcale of intelligence, that no fear whatever is entertained, not merely of their knowing what paſſes in the Imperial Parliament, but of their even knowing what is circulated in the newſpapers of the Iſlands.

Page 27, line 30.

The ſhips fitted up for this trade will not be fit for any other trade, on account of their being built according to Act of Parliament of particular dimenſions.] There is no Act of Parliament which ſpecifies the *dimenſions* of a ſlave-ſhip. The height between the decks, and that alone, is preſcribed in the Slave carrying Act. That height, which is five feet, is a very convenient height for almoſt any purpoſe. See note to page 12, line 26, *ſupra*. p. 156.

Page 30, line 5.

It is one of the glories of Chriſtianity to have gradually extinguiſhed the Slave Trade and even Slavery, wherever its influence was felt.] The reader is referred, in proof of this poſition, to a work lately publiſhed by the venerable Biſhop of London, entitled, "The beneficial effects of "Chriſtianity on the temporal concerns of mankind, "proved from hiſtory and from facts." Publiſhed by *Cadell & Davies*.

* See Royal Gazette of Jamaica, for 2nd Auguſt, 1806.

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Page 33, line 37.

Lord Melville.] Lord MELVILLE's name is here introduced by miſtake; it ought to have been the Duke of PORTLAND.

Page 34, line 25.

The co-operation of the Weſt India Legiſlature.] See note to page 24, line 5, *ſupra.* p. 158.

Page 38, line 33.

Let my Noble Friend ſee that the negroes are well fed.] In a report of a Committee of the Legiſlature of the Leeward Iſlands, appointed in October 1797, to examine into the paſt treatment of Slaves, is the following paſſage. "It would tend very much to the intereſt of their maſters, "if the Legiſlature would aſcertain the quantity of food "and raiment that maſters ſhould be *compelled* to give "their Slaves, as there are reaſons to believe ſome maſters "do not afford them a proportionate quantity of either "for their neceſſary ſubſiſtence. Your Committee cannot "help obſerving on the impolicy of the meaſure uſually "adopted by maſters of Slaves, who generally calculate "only on the expences they incur by feeding and cloth-"ing them, without adverting to the additional advan-"tages that muſt accrue by adding as much as poſſible to "their comfort, and rendering their minds eaſy, happy, "and contented. A Slave well fed and clothed will be "able to perform double the ſervice of one indifferently "fed and clothed." Here we have pretty large admiſſions for a Committee of Planters. But what is the reſult of this apparently humane report? Some ſtriking amelioration, doubtleſs, in the meaſure of a Slave's ſuſtenance. If ſo, how dreadful muſt have been his ſituation previouſly! For the Act of the Leeward Iſlands, adopted in purſuance of this report, ordains, that the weekly allowance to each Slave (in caſes where there are *no* proviſion grounds allowed) ſhall be at the rate of ſeven pints of rice; or eight pints of peaſe, wheat, rye flour, or Indian corn meal; or nine pints of corn, beans, or oatmeal: to which is to be added a further weekly allowance of one pound and a quarter of herrings or other ſalted proviſions, or double the quantity of freſh fiſh or other freſh pro-

viſions!!! (Papers, &c. preſented to the Houſe of Commons, 7th May, 1804. Leeward Iſlands, p. 7 and 15.) Now, this boaſted enactment, which has been repreſented as greatly improving the condition of Slaves in the Weſt Indies, is perhaps the moſt deciſive proof that has ever been exhibited of their harſh and cruel treatment. The authorized allowance, which we may be ſure is a maximum, is wholly inadequate to the due ſuſtentation of a labouring Slave. The Legiſlature of the Bahama Iſlands was ſo ſenſible of this, that in their Slave Laws, 14 pints of rice inſtead of 7, and 21 pints of wheat flour inſtead of 8, are allowed to each Slave. (Ibid. Bahama Iſlands, p. 3.) A Committee of the Legiſlature of the Iſland of Tobago have alſo ſtated it as their opinion, that the following quantities of food ſhould be fixed by Law as the weekly allowance of each Negro, viz. 3 lb. of ſalt pork, or 4 lb. of ſalt beef or ſalt fiſh, together with 14 pints of wheat flour, or Indian meal or peaſe. (Papers laid before the Houſe of Lords, 24th May, 1799, p. 70.) Compare this with the Leeward Iſland allowance, taking into the account at the ſame time this farther circumſtance, that the Tobago Report recommends thoſe quantities, not as the *ſole*, but as the principal means of ſuſtenance for the Negroes, who in that Iſland are ſaid to have, even in the moſt unfavourable ſeaſons, other ſources of ſupply: (Ib. p. 71.) whereas the 5th clauſe of the Leeward Iſland Law empowers the maſter to diminiſh the ſlaves allowance, ſmall as it is, in proportion to the other means of ſupply which he may poſſeſs. Even the *priſon* allowance, preſcribed by the Conſolidated Slave Act of Jamaica, Clauſe 40, is 21 pints per week.—Can we wonder that the population of the Leeward Iſlands ſhould decreaſe?

Page 38, line 35.

Their moral improvement.] By referring to the note to page 24, line 5, (p. 158) the reader will ſee that with much parade of legiſlation on this point, nothing has been done. So little have the Legiſlature of Jamaica been diſpoſed to concur in this object, that notwithſtanding the utter inattention of the parochial clergy in that Iſland to the inſtruction of the Slaves, they paſſed a law in December,

ber, 1802, by which any perſon (not duly qualified by law) who ſhould preſume to preach or teach in any aſſembly of negroes or people of colour within the Iſland, ſhould be deemed *a rogue and a vagabond*; and any magiſtrate might apprehend and commit him to goal, and on conviction, not before a jury, but before three magiſtrates, the offender, if free, might be ſentenced to hard labour in the workhouſe for one month for the firſt offence, and for ſix months for every ſubſequent offence; and if a ſlave, to a month's hard labour for the firſt offence, and for every ſubſequent offence, to "a public flogging, not exceeding "thirty-nine laſhes." In caſes however of what are called "extraordinary heinouſneſs", the Act gave the Aſſize Court a power to inflict on the offender, "ſuch puniſhment as "ſuch Court ſhall ſee fit to inflict, not extending to life." This perſecuting edict, after having been in force about two years, and having during that time been made an inſtrument of oppreſſion againſt the Methodiſt and other Miſſionaries, who had viſited the Iſland with the benevolent purpoſe of conveying to the poor Slaves the light and the conſolations of Chriſtianity which are denied to them by their maſters, has happily been diſallowed by His Majeſty. A ſimilar Act was paſſed ſome years ſince by the Legiſlature of St. Vincent's, but annulled in the ſame manner.

Abundant evidence might be produced from the papers tranſmitted by the Governors of Antigua and St. Kitt's, and from the examinations before the Privy Council, and Houſe of Commons, to prove the extenſively beneficial effects which have attended the labours of the Moravian and Methodiſt Miſſionaries among the Slaves in thoſe Iſlands, and the conſequent folly and wickedneſs of the conduct purſued by the law-givers of Jamaica. Chief Juſtice OTTLEY, of St. Vincent's, an enemy to the abolition of the Slave Trade, ſtated before the Houſe of Commons, (Evidence for 1790, p. 174) that if proper attention were paid to the religious inſtruction of the Slaves, he was convinced it would be of the greateſt advantage to the Planter; that in Antigua the Slaves had been greatly improved in their morals by the inſtructions of the Moravians, inſomuch that the actual value of ſuch Slaves, conſidered as objects of commerce, had been raiſed; and that an in-

creaſe

creaſe of population from the births would be an undoubted conſequence of the moral improvement of the Slaves. Another enemy to the Abolition, ALEXANDER WILLOCK, Eſq. (Evidence for 1790, Part ii. p. 355) ſtated that he had heard the Slaves inſtructed at Methodiſt meetings to be attentive and obedient to their maſters, with other good advice; but never knew the regular clergy pay any attention to them.—See likewiſe papers preſented to the Houſe of Commons 8th June, 1804. Leeward Iſlands, p. 83.

Page 41, line 10.

The credit of Weſt India property will be greatly diminiſhed by this meaſure.] Mr. LONG, the hiſtorian, of Jamaica, himſelf a Planter and a friend to the Weſt India ſyſtem, recommends the ſtopping of importation as the only ſure means of improving the credit of Weſt India proprietors. He adviſes the laying a duty equal to a prohibition on all negroes imported. "Such a law," he proceeds to ſay, "would be attended with the following good conſe-"quences." "It would enable the Planter to retrieve "his affairs by *preventing him from running in debt*, either "by renting or purchaſing of negroes. It would render "ſuch recruits leſs neceſſary *by the redoubled care he would* "*be obliged to take of his preſent ſtock, the preſervation of* "*their lives and health.* And laſtly, it would raiſe the "value of the negroes in the Iſland. *A North American* "*Province, by this prohibition alone for a few years, from* "*being deeply plunged in debt, has become independent, rich,* "*and flouriſhing.*"

Page 43, line 1.

As to the moral improvement of the negroes, there is no one who has any property in that country who would not co-operate, &c.] See for a full proof of this the notes to page 24, line 3, (p. 161) and to p. 38. line 35, (p. 164).

Page 46, line 30.

This deteſtable ſyſtem not only affords to men of bad diſpoſitions full ſcope for their exerciſe, but renders men conſtitutionally of good diſpoſitions, callous to the miſeries of others.] In ſome papers preſented to the Houſe of Commons on the 25th of February, 1805, is contained a letter from Lord

Lord SEAFORTH, the Governor of Barbadoes, in which he thus writes to Earl CAMDEN.

" I incloſe four papers containing, from different quarters, reports on the horrid murders I mentioned in ſome former letters. *They are ſelected from a great number*, among which there is not one in contradiction of the horrible facts, though ſeveral of the letters are very conciſe and defective. The truth is, that nothing has given me more trouble than to get at the bottom of theſe buſineſſes, *ſo horribly abſurd are the prejudices of the people*," (not of one or two, or of a few individuals, but of the PEOPLE.)

" I incloſe the Attorney General's letter to me on the ſubject of the negroes *ſo moſt wantonly murdered*. I am ſorry to ſay SEVERAL OTHER INSTANCES OF THE SAME BARBARITY have occurred, with which I have not troubled your Lordſhip, as *I only wiſhed to make you acquainted with the ſubject in general*."

The letters to which Lord SEAFORTH refers, and which accompany the above extracts, are from four of the moſt reſpectable individuals in the iſland of Barbadoes, viz. Mr. INCE, *the Preſident of the Council*; Mr. COULTHURST, *the Advocate General*; Mr. BECCLES, *the Attorney General*; and the Rev. Mr. PILGRIM. Theſe gentlemen all agree in the material facts of the caſes which they ſtate. It would, therefore, be an unneceſſary repetition to tranſcribe the whole of their letters: it will be ſufficient to give the ſubſtance of the ſtatements which they contain.

1. On the 10th of April, 1804, a militia man of the name of HALLS, of the St. Michael's regiment, returning from military duty, overtook on the road ſome negroes who were going quietly home from their labour. When he came near he called out that he would kill them, and immediately began to run after them. The negroes not ſuppoſing that he really intended to do them any injury, and imagining that he was in joke, did not endeavour to eſcape, but merely made way for him. The perſon neareſt to him happened to be a woman, the property of a Mr. CLARKE, the owner of SIMMONS's eſtate, who is ſtated to have been a valuable Slave, the mother of five or ſix children, and far advanced in pregnancy. *Without the ſmalleſt provocation of any kind*, HALLS *coolly and deliberately*

rately plunged his bayonet ſeveral times into her body, when the poor creature dropped and expired without a groan. Two gentlemen were eye-witneſſes of this horrid action. One of them, Mr. HARDING, the manager of the Codrington College eſtate, went up to HALLS and ſpoke harſhly to him, and ſaid he ought to be hanged, for he never ſaw a more unprovoked murder, and that he would certainly carry him before a magiſtrate. HALLS's reply is very remarkable. "*For what?*" ſaid he (with the utmoſt indifference as to the crime) "*for what?* FOR KILLING A NEGRO !!!" This is a ſhort but a ſignificant ſentence, ſtrongly confirming an important truth which has frequently been aſſerted, viz. that the negroes are regarded by their white-ſkinned oppreſſors as an inferior order of beings, and, under the influence of this ſentiment, are naturally enough denied the common rights of humanity, and excluded from the pale of that ſympathy, which a ſenſe of a common nature and a common extraction is calculated to inſpire. Mr. HARDING, however, greatly to his credit, was proof againſt the force of HALLS's compendious reaſoning, and having procured aſſiſtance laid hold of him, and carried him before Mr. Juſtice WALTON. Mr. Juſtice WALTON, it would appear, was not indiſpoſed to uſe the authority with which he was veſted in bringing HALLS to juſtice, but he found, that "*in his ſituation as a magiſtrate, the law of the Iſland gave "him no juriſdiction or authority over him,*" and, in ſhort, that he had no right to commit him. In this dilemma, Mr. WALTON applied to Mr. Preſident INCE. "I told Mr. WALTON," ſays the Preſident in his letter to Lord SEAFORTH, "that I regretted with real concern, the deficiency in our law; but that there was a penalty due to the king in ſuch caſes," (viz. the ELEVEN POUNDS FOUR SHILLINGS) "and that, as Mr. HARDING had ſufficiently ſubſtantiated the fact, I would order him to be committed till he paid the forfeiture, or a ſuit ſhould be commenced againſt him," Accordingly he was ſent to priſon.

2. The ſecond inſtance produced by Lord SEAFORTH is not inferior in atrocity to the firſt. A Mr. COLBECK, who lives overſeer on Cabbage-tree Plantation, in St. Lucy's pariſh, "*had bought a new Negro Boy out of the yard,*"

yard," (meaning the ſlave yard where negroes are expoſed to ſale, in the ſame manner as the cattle and ſheep in Smithfield market), and carried him home. Conceiving a liking to the boy, he took him into the houſe and made him wait at table. Mr. CRONE, the overſeer of ROWE's eſtate, which is near to Cabbage-tree Plantation, was in the habit of viſiting Mr. COLBECK, *had noticed the boy, and knew him well.* A fire happening one night in the neighbourhood, COLBECK went to give his aſſiſtance, and the boy followed him. COLBECK, on his return home, miſſed the boy, who had loſt his way, and as he did not make his appearance the next day, he ſent round to his neighbours, and *particularly to* CRONE, informing them, that his African lad had ſtrayed, that *he could not ſpeak a word of Engliſh,* and poſſibly he might be found breaking ſome ſugar canes, or taking ſomething elſe for his ſupport: in which caſe he requeſted they would not injure him, but ſend him home, and he would pay any damage the boy might have committed. After a lapſe of two or three days the poor creature was diſcovered in a gully (or deep water courſe) near to ROWE's eſtate; and a number of negroes were ſoon aſſembled about the place. The boy naturally terrified with the threats, the noiſe, and the appearance of ſo many people, retreated into a hole in a rock, having a ſtone in his hand, for the purpoſe, probably, of defence. By this time CRONE, and ſome other white perſons, had come up. *By their orders a fire was put to the hole where the boy lay, who, when he began to be ſcorched, ran from his hiding place into a pool of water which was near.* Some of the negroes purſued him into the pool; and the boy, it is ſaid, threw the ſtone which he held in his hand at one of them. On this, two of the white men, CRONE and HOLLINGSWORTH, *fired at the boy ſeveral times with ſhot, and the negroes pelted him with ſtones. He was at length dragged out of the pool in a dying condition; for he had not only received ſeveral bruiſes from the ſtones, but his breaſt was ſo pierced with the ſhot that it was like a cullender.* The white ſavages (this is the language of Mr. Attorney General BECCLES) ordered the negroes to dig a grave. *Whilſt they were digging it, the poor creature made ſigns of begging for water, which was*

not given to him: but as ſoon as the grave was dug, he was thrown into it and covered over, and, as is believed, WHILE YET ALIVE. COLBCEK, the owner of the boy, hearing that a Negro had been killed, went to CRONE to inquire into the truth of the report. CRONE *told him that a negro had been killed and buried*, but *aſſured him it was not his, for he knew him well*, and he need not be at the trouble of opening the grave. On this COLBECK *went away* SATISFIED. Receiving, however, further information, he returned and had the grave opened, when he found the murdered negro to be his own. COLBECK brought his action of damages in the courts of the iſland againſt CRONE and HOLLINGSWORTH. The cauſe was ready to be tried, and the court had met for the purpoſe, when they thought proper to pay double the value of the boy, and £25 for the uſe of the iſland, (being £5 leſs than the penalty fixed by law, of £15 currency each), rather than ſuffer the buſineſs to go to a hearing. "This, I am truly ſorry to ſay," obſerves the Advocate General, "*was the only puniſhment which could be inflicted for ſo barbarous and atrocious a crime.*"

This horrid recital (which is given almoſt in the words of the report, merely avoiding repetitions) ſeems to require little comment. One circumſtance of it, however, may not ſtrike the minds of ſome readers with its due force, although it appears to be the moſt affecting part of the whole caſe. COLBECK, it is ſaid, on hearing that it was not his Slave who had been murdered, WENT AWAY SATISFIED. O moſt opprobrious ſatisfaction! The preceding part of the narrative had prepared us to expect in COLBECK ſome approximation to European feeling. But what is the fact? On being cooly told that a negro had been killed and buried—told ſo by his neighbour, the murderer: is he ſhocked? Does he expreſs any horror or indignation on the occaſion? No! he goes away *ſatisfied!!* Let the reader give its due weight to this one circumſtance, and he muſt be convinced that a ſtate of ſociety muſt exiſt in the Weſt Indies of which, as an inhabitant of this happy iſland, he can ſcarcely form any adequate conception. Suppoſe, inſtead of a Negro Slave, that it had been a horſe which had been thus killed; COLBECK, had his horſe happened to be miſſing at the time,

time, would have purſued exactly the ſame ſteps, and would have been affected in the ſame way as in the preſent inſtance. We may alſo learn, from this impreſſive circumſtance, the value of Weſt Indian teſtimony when given in favour of Weſt Indian humanity. The moral perceptions and feelings which prevail in that quarter of the world, it will be perceived, are wholly different from thoſe on this ſide of the Atlantic. It may be allowed that theſe men mean what they ſay, when they give each other the praiſe of humanity. But examine their ſtandard. Who is this man of humanity? It is one, who, hearing that a fellow creature has been cruelly and wantonly murdered, *goes away ſatisfied*, becauſe he himſelf has ſuſtained no loſs by the murder! An exception may be admitted in favour of a few men of enlightened minds: but the remark applies to *the people*—to the bulk of the community, whoſe prejudices are ſtated by Lord SEAFORTH to be ſo *horribly abſurd*, as to reſiſt all meaſures for remedying this dreadful ſtate of things. But not to detain the reader any longer with reaſonings on this ſubject, let us proceed to the third caſe communicated by Lord SEAFORTH, and which, if poſſible, is worſe than either of the foregoing.

3. A man of the name of NOWELL, who lives in St. Andrew's pariſh, had been in the habit of behaving brutally towards his wife, and one day went ſo far as to lock her up in a room, and confine her in chains. A negro woman belonging to this man, *touched with compaſſion for her unfortunate miſtreſs*, undertook privately to releaſe her. NOWELL found it out, and in order to puniſh her, obliged her to put her tongue through a hole in a board, to which he faſtened it on the oppoſite ſide with a fork, and left her in that ſituation for ſome time. He afterwards cut out her tongue nearly by the root, in conſequence of which ſhe almoſt inſtantly died. No puniſhment followed this monſtrous act of barbarity.

It will, doubtleſs, be argued, that individual inſtances of cruelty like thoſe which have been cited, are no proofs of *general* inhumanity, any more than the annals of the Old Bailey can be conſidered as exhibiting a fair view of our national character. There is, however, this very

remarkable difference in the two caſes, a difference which is fatal to the argument. In this country, when we read of crimes, we read of their being followed by juſt retribution; by ſevere and exemplary puniſhment. In the Weſt Indies, on the contrary, we not only hear of the greateſt crimes eſcaping with impunity, but we find the laws themſelves conſpiring to ſhelter criminals from juſtice: we find the moſt reſpectable and enlightened part of the community ſanctioning the perpetration even of murder, by their refuſal to recognize the commiſſion of it as a felonious act.

But it will be ſaid by ſome Weſt Indians, "granting the caſe to be in Barbadoes as you have repreſented it, it is very unfair to extend the charge of inhumanity to the iſlands generally. The legiſlatures of all the other iſlands have by law made the murder of a Slave felony, and have beſides provided various ſalutary regulations for 'the protection of Slaves,' which place them in a ſituation even of enviable ſecurity and comfort." In reply to this reaſoning, it will only be neceſſary to refer to a preceding note, viz. that to page 24, line 5. *ſupra*, (p. 160,) and to Lord GRENVILLE'S ſpeech, p. 98.

A work has been recently publiſhed with the title of "Notes on the Weſt Indies, written during the expedition of the late General Sir RALPH ABERCROMBIE," (1796, &c.) by GEORGE PINCKARD, M. D. of the Royal College of Phyſicians, Inſpector General of Hoſpitals to His Majeſty's Forces, and Phyſician to the Bloomſbury Diſpenſary. The facts recorded by Dr. PINCKARD, are the reſult of his own perſonal obſervation, and are therefore entitled to particular attention. The remaining part of this note will be taken from Dr. PINCKARD'S work.

"Two unhappy negroes, a man and a woman, having been driven by cruel treatment to abſcond from the plantation Lancaſter, were taken a few days ſince, and brought back to the eſtate, when the manager, whoſe inhuman ſeverity had cauſed them to fly from his tyrannic government, dealt out to them his avenging deſpotiſm with more than ſavage brutality. Taking with him two of the ſtrongeſt drivers, armed with the heavieſt whips, he led out theſe trembling and wretched Africans, early in the morning,

morning, to a remote part of the eſtate, too diſtant for the officers to hear their cries; and there, tying down firſt the man, he ſtood by, and made the drivers flog him with many hundred laſhes, until, on releaſing him from the ground, it was diſcovered that he was nearly exhauſted: and in this ſtate the inhuman monſter ſtruck him on the head with the butt-end of a large whip, and felled him to the earth; when the poor negro, eſcaping at once from his ſlavery and his ſufferings, expired at the murderer's feet. But not ſatiated with blood, this ſavage tyrant next tied down the naked woman, on the ſpot by the dead body of her huſband, and with the whips, already deep in gore, compelled the drivers to inflict a puniſhment of ſeveral hundred laſhes, which had nearly releaſed her alſo from a life of toil and torture.

"Hearing of theſe acts of cruelty, on my return from the hoſpital, and ſcarcely believing it poſſible that they could have been committed, I went immediately to the ſick-houſe to ſatisfy myſelf by ocular teſtimony; when, alas! I diſcovered that all I had heard was too fatally true: for, ſhocking to relate, I found the wretched and almoſt murdered woman lying ſtark naked on her belly, upon the dirty boards, without any covering to the horrid wounds which had been cut by the whips, and with the ſtill warm and bloody corpſe of the man extended at her ſide, upon the neck of which was an iron collar, and a long heavy chain, which the now murdered negro had been made to wear from the time of his return to the eſtate.

"The fleſh of the woman was ſo torn, as to exhibit one extenſive ſore from the loins almoſt down to her hams; nor had humanity adminiſtered even a drop of oil to ſoften her wounds. The only relief ſhe knew was that of extending her feeble arm in order to beat off the tormenting flies with a ſmall green bough, which had been put into her hand for that purpoſe by the ſympathizing kindneſs of a fellow ſlave. A more ſhocking and diſtreſſing ſpectacle can ſcarcely be conceived. The dead man, and the almoſt expiring woman, had been brought home from the place of puniſhment and thrown into the negro hoſpital, amidſt the crowd of ſick, with cruel unconcern.

concern. Lying on the oppoſite ſide of the corpſe was a fellow ſufferer in a ſimilar condition to the poor woman. His buttocks, thighs, and part of his back, had been flogged into one large ſore, which was ſtill raw, although he had been puniſhed a fortnight before! !"

After an account of the burial of the murdered man, Dr. PINCKARD gives us this further information reſpecting the feelings of Colonial maſters, and the caſe of the unfortunate woman.

"A few days after the funeral, the attorney of the eſtate happened to call at Lancaſter to viſit the officers, and the converſation naturally turning upon the late cruelty of the manager, and the conſequent injury derived to the proprietor, we aſked him what puniſhment the laws of the Colony had provided for ſuch horrid and barbarous crimes; expreſſing our hope that the manager would ſuffer the diſgrace he ſo juſtly merited: when, to our great ſurpriſe, *the attorney ſmiled, and treated our remarks only as the dreams of men unpractiſed in the ways of ſlavery.* He ſpake of the murder with as little feeling as the manager had perpetrated it, and ſeemed to be amuſed at *our viſionary ideas of puniſhing a white man for his cruel treatment of ſlaves.*

"To the queſtion, whether the manager would not be diſmiſſed from the eſtate, he replied, '*Certainly not;*' adding, that 'if the negro had been treated as he deſerved he would have been flogged to death long before.' Such was the amount of his ſympathy and concern! The laws of the Colony, he ſaid, were intended to prevent any perſon from puniſhing a ſlave with more than thirty-nine laſhes, for the ſame offence; but by incurring only a ſmall fine he could at any time puniſh a negro with as many hundred laſhes as he might wiſh, 'although the Governor and the Fiſcal were ſtanding at his elbow.'

"You will believe that I was careful to obſerve the progreſs of the frightful wounds inflicted upon the poor woman, and to watch her recovery: and you will be ſhocked to know that her ſufferings were ſeverely increaſed, by the cruel neglect which ſucceeded to her puniſhment.

"One

" One morning, upon hearing the loud cries of a female, I was led to look out at my window, when I ſaw ſome negroes carrying this unfortunate woman from the ſick houſe into the yard, where they laid her down in the dirt, upon the bare ground, amidſt a heavy ſhower of rain; then kneeling at her ſides, they proceeded to examine minutely into her wounds; and you will ſcarcely hold it credible, when I tell you that they were employed a full half-hour picking maggots out of her ſores. The ulcerations had penetrated to a great depth, particularly within-ſide the thighs, where the laſhes of the whips had cut round, and torn the fleſh in a frightful manner. The ulcers were very raw, and conſiderably enlarged, by the gnawing of the maggots which had been bred within them.

" I cannot deſcribe to you the horror I felt at this deplorable ſight. I had often heard of maggotting ſheep, but this was the firſt inſtance I had met with of maggotting a human being; and I felt additional diſtreſs, in finding the ſubject of it a poor unhappy female, whoſe puniſhment had been already ſevere, and in whom the occaſion for ſuch a beaſtly proceſs might and ought to have been prevented had the common dictates of humanity been obſerved. The poor afflicted wretch groaned heavily under her ſufferings; and the operation which in itſelf was ſeverely painful, was rendered ſo in a ſtill greater degree by the roughneſs of her untutored ſurgeons. During the whole of the time, ſhe was expoſed naked to the rain, and to the eyes of the ſlaves, officers, ſoldiers, and all who chanced to paſs that way. It was a ſpectacle which was equally offenſive to humanity and to delicacy!

" On repreſenting the horrid cruelty of this caſe to the ſurgeon, he remarked to us, that the ſores from puniſhments did not uſually fall under his treatment, but were left to the care of the negro doctor, who had the charge of the ſick houſe; and that nothing was more common than to ſee the wounds filled with maggots—' indeed,' ſaid he, ' it is often our greateſt difficulty, in the practice of ſurgery in theſe climates, to prevent the breeding of inſects in the ſores." (3d vol. p. 65—70.)

" The

" The corporal puniſhment of ſlaves is ſo frequent, that inſtead of exciting the repugnant ſenſations felt by Europeans on firſt witneſſing it, ſcarcely does it produce, in the breaſts of thoſe long accuſtomed to the Weſt Indies, even the ſlighteſt feelings of compaſſion. The lady I have above alluded to, *appears of good natural diſpoſition, and in no degree diſpoſed to general cruelty;* but the frequency of the ſight has rendered her callous to its common influence upon the feelings.

" Being one morning at her houſe, while ſitting in converſation, we ſuddenly heard the loud cries of a negro ſuffering under the whip. Mrs. —— expreſſed ſurprize on obſerving me ſhudder at his ſhrieks; and you will believe that I was in utter aſtoniſhment to find her treat his ſufferings as matter of amuſement. It proved that the puniſhment proceeded from the arm of the lady's huſband, and fell upon one of her own ſlaves: and, can you believe, that on learning this, ſhe exclaimed, with a broad ſmile, 'Aha! it will do him good! a little wholeſome flagellation will refreſh him.—It will ſober him.—It will open his ſkin, and make him alert. If Y—— was to give it them all it would be of ſervice to them!'

" I could not compliment the lady upon her humanity. The loud clang of the whip continued, and the poor imploring negro as loudly cried, 'Oh maſſa, maſſa!—God A'mighty!—God bleſs you, maſſa!—I beg your pardon! —Oh! maſſa, oh!—I beg your pardon!—Oh! God A'mighty—God bleſs you!'—Still the whip ſounded aloud, and ſtill the lady cried, 'Aye, its very neceſſary'!" (vol. ii. p. 192, 193.)

" Unfortunately, I am now enabled to ſpeak of the puniſhment of a ſlave, which was far more ſevere than that mentioned in my laſt letter; and, I am ſorry to add, attended with ſimilar marks of inſenſibility, and want of feeling, on the part of a white female. Happening to call one morning upon a lady at Stabroek, in company with ſeveral Europeans who had been my fellow-paſſengers hither, we were ſcarcely ſeated before we heard the bleeding clang of the whip, and the painful cries of a poor unfortunate black.

" The lady of the houſe, more accuſtomed to ſcenes of ſlavery

ſlavery than ourſelves, pointed to the ſpot, and, as if it were a pleaſant ſight for ſtrangers, or ſomething that might divert us, aſked, with apparent glee, if we ſaw them flogging the *negre?* Truly we ſaw the whole too clearly. A poor unhappy ſlave was ſtretched out naked, upon the open ſtreet, tied down with his face to the ground before the Fiſcal's door, his two legs extended to one ſtake, his arms ſtrained out, at full length, to two others in form of the letter Y, and thus ſecured to the earth, two ſtrong armed drivers placed at his ſides, were cutting his bare ſkin, by turns, with long heavy laſhed whips, which from the ſound alone, without ſeeing the blood that followed, conveyed the idea of tearing away pieces of fleſh at every ſtroke." Ib. p. 201.

Page 54, line 28.

I am afraid it (the Abolition) will be the occaſion of an infinite quantity of blood being ſpilt.] In what way the prohibiting a further increaſe, by importation, of the negro population in the Iſlands, ſhould tend to the effuſion of blood there, is not very obvious; that being an effect much more likely (whether we conſult reaſon or experience), to attend a large influx of African negroes into the Colonies. In this opinion the Hiſtorian of Jamaica, LONG, fully concurs. Beſides, no ſuch effect has followed the meaſure of Abolition in any of the American States.

Page 57, line 1.

They were thrown overboard to the number of one hundred and thirty.] The circumſtance here alluded to was certainly never ſtated, as Mr. ROSE ſuppoſed, in any evidence either before the Privy Council or either Houſe of Parliament. It came out on the trial of a caſe of inſurance * before Lord Chief Juſtice MANSFIELD, and Juſtices WILLS and BULLER, in the Court of King's Bench, at Guildhall, in the month of March, 1783. The particulars, as carefully noted at the time of the trial, were as follows, viz.

* In this Caſe, GREGSON and others, againſt GILBERT and others, the Counſel for the Inſurers were Mr. DAVENPORT, Mr. PIGOT, and Mr. HEYWOOD, and for the Owners, the Solicitor General (LEE), and Mr. CHAMBRE.

The ſhip *Zong*, Luke *Collingwood*, maſter, ſailed from the Iſle of *St. Thomas*, on the Coaſt of *Africa*, the 6th September, 1781, with 442 ſlaves and 17 whites on board, for *Jamaica*; and on the 27th November following, ſhe fell in with that iſland; but inſtead of proceeding to ſome port, the maſter, either through ignorance or a ſiniſter intention, ran the ſhip to leeward, alleging that he miſtook *Jamaica* for *Hiſpaniola*.

Sickneſs and mortality had by this time taken place. It is needleſs to ſtate that previouſly to the act regulating the tranſport of ſlaves, theſe evils ſcarcely ever failed to carry off vaſt numbers during the voyage; the avarice of the traders inducing them to crowd, or rather to *pack*, too many ſlaves together in the holds of their ſhips. On board the Zong, between the time of her leaving the Coaſt of Africa (6th September) and the 29th November, 1781, upwards of SIXTY ſlaves and SEVEN white people died, and a GREAT MANY of the remaining ſlaves, on the day laſt mentioned, were ſick of ſome ſevere diſorder, and LIKELY NOT TO LIVE LONG.

Theſe circumſtances of *ſickneſs* and *mortality* are neceſſary to be remarked; and alſo the conſequence of them, viz. that the *dead* and *dying* ſlaves would have been a loſs to the owners, and in ſome proportion alſo to the captain of the ſhip, who was allowed a certain per centage on the proceeds; unleſs ſome pretence or expedient had been found to throw the loſs upon the inſurers.

The *ſickneſs* and *mortality* on board the Zong, previous to the 29th November, 1781 (the time when they began to throw the poor negroes overboard alive) was NOT occaſioned by the *want of water*; for it was proved that the people on board did not diſcover till that very day, the 29th November, that the ſtock of freſh water was reduced, as was alleged, to 200 gallons. Yet the ſame day, or on the evening of it, *before any ſoul had been put to ſhort allowance*, and before there was any preſent or real want of water, the maſter of the ſhip called together the officers, and told them to the following effect, 'that if the ſlaves died a natural death, it would be the loſs of the owners of the ſhip: but if they were *thrown alive into the ſea, it would be the loſs of the underwriters*,' and to palliate this inhuman

inhuman propoſal, the maſter, *Collingwood*, argued, that it would not be ſo cruel to *throw the poor ſick wretches* (meaning the ſlaves) *into the ſea*, as to ſuffer them to linger out a few days, under the diſorders with which they were afflicted. To this ſcheme the mate (whoſe name was *Kelſall*) objected at the firſt, and ſaid '*there was no preſent want of water* to juſtify ſuch a meaſure.' But *Collingwood* prevailed upon the reſt of the officers and crew to liſten to his propoſal, and on the ſame evening, and during two or three following days, he cauſed to be picked out from the ſhip's cargo 133 ſlaves, all or moſt of whom were ſick, and thought not likely to live, and ORDERED THE CREW BY TURNS TO THROW THEM INTO THE SEA, which order was readily complied with. It appeared by the evidence of Mr. *Stubbs*, late Governor of Anamaboe, then a paſſenger, and of the chief mate *Kelſall*, that on the 29th November, 54 perſons were actually thrown overboard *alive*, and that on the following day 42 more were alſo thrown overboard.

On the ſecond day after this barbarous murder had been committed, viz. on the 1ſt of December, and *before the ſtock of water was conſumed*, there fell a plentiful rain, which was admitted to have '*continued a day or two*,' and which enabled them to collect *ſix caſks of water*, which was 'FULL ALLOWANCE for 11 days, or for 23 days at half allowance;' whereas the ſhip actually arrived at Jamaica in 21 days afterwards, viz. on the 22d December, 1781. They ſeem alſo to have had an opportunity of ſending their boat for water, no leſs than 13 days ſooner, viz. on the 9th December, when they '*made the weſt end of Jamaica diſtant two or three leagues only*,' as was ſtated by a perſon who was on board; ſo that the ſix caſks of rain water caught on the 1ſt and 2d of December, (only ſeven days before this opportunity of obtaining water from *Jamaica*) was not only a *providential* ſupply, but may perhaps be viewed as *providentially* demonſtrating the iniquity of pretending a *neceſſity* to put innocent men to death, through the *mere apprehenſion of a want*, which, even ſuppoſing it had taken place, could not have afforded an admiſſible juſtification of the horrible deed; but which

did *never really exiſt or take place at all* in their caſe; their ſtock of water having never been actually conſumed.

But this is not all. Notwithſtanding this ſupply, and the proof which it afforded of the poſſibility of obtaining *further ſupplies by rain;* and although they had the additional hope of being able to hold out with their increaſed ſtock of water, till they might chance to meet with ſome ſhip, or be able to ſend to ſome iſland for a further ſupply; they nevertheleſs *caſt 26 more human perſons alive into the ſea,* EVEN AFTER THE RAIN, whoſe hands were alſo fettered. And this act was done, it ſeems, in the ſight of many of the unhappy ſlaves who were upon deck at the time. And ſuch an effect had the ſight on them, that apprehending a ſimilar fate, and dreading, it would ſeem, the being fettered, ten more of them in deſpair jumped overboard, and were *likewiſe drowned!*

All theſe facts, it is never to be forgotten, came out, not upon the trial of *Collingwood* for murder, but upon a civil ſuit inſtituted by the owners, for the purpoſe of recovering from the underwriters, the value of the ſlaves thus cruelly murdered. And, ſtill more ſtrange to relate, the owners gained their cauſe, while the agents in this horrible tranſaction were not even queſtioned criminally upon it.

Page 58, line 8.

A negro does not underſtand any condition but that of maſter and ſlave. A negro is hardly ever induced to work as a free labourer.] It is a notorious fact that throughout the whole continent of North America the negroes do work, and work diligently, as free labourers; and that they do underſtand the duties and the privileges of other conditions beſides that of a ſlave. In nine of the United States the condition even of ſlavery itſelf is aboliſhed. In the Spaniſh Colonies lying in the ſame parallel of latitude with Jamaica, the number of free negroes is ſtated to be equal if not ſuperior to the number of ſlave negroes. And there the free negroes labour induſtriouſly. Can it be ſaid with any truth that the ideas of the negroes of St. Domingo are confined to the condition of maſter and ſlave? Do not they labour as free men, and for hire? If not, why ſhould our government have ſo liberally encouraged the trade to that Iſland, both with a view to the conſumption

conſumption of our manufactures, and the immenſe returns of valuable produce, all raiſed by free labour, which are to be procured for them? Or are the negroes in St. Domingo a different race from thoſe in Jamaica?

But this reaſoning, though ſufficiently deciſive, does not comprize all the evidence which may be produced on the ſubject. Captain BEAVER in his African Memoranda (printed for BALDWIN), details at great length the particulars of an experiment conducted under his direction, for the purpoſe of aſcertaining whether tropical productions could be cultivated in Africa by means of *free labour*. *The point he ſays is proved beyond a doubt*, (p. 304). And certainly no one can read his work without agreeing with him.

On the 27th of February, 1804, a Committee of the Houſe of Commons, appointed to examine the ſtate of the Colony of Sierra Leone, after a long and laborious inveſtigation, preſented to the Houſe a Report containing the following paſſage. "The facility with which free native-labourers have been induced to ſeek employment in the Colony, and the ſatisfaction they appear generally to have given to their employers, forms a leading and intereſting feature in the hiſtory of the Colony; and there is reaſon to believe that to whatever extent cultivation may be carried this demand will always be ſupplied."

To theſe teſtimonies innumerable others might be added from all the old writers on Africa, as well as from PARK. "The induſtry of the Foulahs," this writer obſerves, "is every where remarkable." p. 61. Again, "The negroes in general, and the Mandingoes in particu-"lar, are conſidered by the whites as indolent and in-"active. I think without reaſon. Few people work harder," p. 280. See for further proofs, the Evidence taken before the Privy Council, before the Houſe of Commons, in 1790 and 1791, and before the Houſe of Lords in 1799. *paſſim*.

It is true at the ſame time, that in Jamaica no free negroe can be found who will conſent to labour for hire in the field; both becauſe no man will voluntarily ſubject himſelf, as he muſt do in that caſe, to the cart whip of the driver; and becauſe he can employ his labour in a thouſand other ways, with infinitely more advantage.

Page

Page 58, line 21.

I can venture to affirm that for forty or fifty years paſt, no means have been left untried which imagination could deviſe or labour execute, to counteract the evils which neceſſarily attend the ſyſtem of ſlavery.] This can hardly be conſidered to apply with any fairneſs as a general deſcription of the Planters of Jamaica, the iſland to which it refers, and that for many cogent reaſons, of which however two only will here be mentioned, becauſe they do not admit of diſpute. Firſt, the Planters of Jamaica, with a few very rare exceptions, have done nothing, literally nothing, to promote the moral improvement of their Slaves. Nay, they have done all in their power to hinder it, as may be ſeen from the note to page 38, line 35, *ſupra* p. 164.

Second, It is generally admitted that no effort has been made to introduce taſk-work in that iſland, although the example of America eſtabliſhes, in ſo ſatisfactory a manner, the ſalutary effect of that expedient. The meaſure doubtleſs may be attended with difficulty; but as the aſſertion now adverted to implies a willingneſs on the part of the Planters to encounter and overcome difficulties in the proſecution of their benevolent plans, it might have been expected that ſome attempt at leaſt would have been made to introduce ſo great an improvement.

Even Mr. Bryan Edwards was decidedly of opinion that much had been left untried, which was calculated to counteract the evils of colonial bondage. In his Hiſtory of the Weſt Indies, Vol. II. p. 180, (3d edit. 8vo.) he propoſes ſeveral expedients for that purpoſe, none of which, it is believed, have yet been adopted. Firſt, "to render their labour certain and determinate; in other words to apportion to each negro, according to his ſtrength, a ſpecific quantity of work, to be performed in a given time, allowing to ſuch of them as ſhall have finiſhed their taſk within the time, the reſt of the day to themſelves, and pay them wages for extra labour." "This plan," he goes on to remark, "ſeems calculated to awaken a ſpirit of emulation and induſtry which the dread of puniſhment can never produce. And at the ſame time it will be neceſſary to ſecure to the negroes by law the little property which their own induſtry may acquire." "A

ſecond

ſecond propoſal is to make them arbiters on the conduct of each other, by inſtituting a ſort of jury among them for the trial of petty offences." This he ſays will give them right notions of diſtributive juſtice, and tend to civilization and improvement. "A third meaſure is, to render the Sabbath what it ought to be, a day of reſt and religious improvement. To which end the markets on Sundays" (for be it known that Sunday is the market day, the only market day, the recognized market day, in Jamaica and the other iſlands) "ought to be ſuppreſſed. They are a diſgrace to a Chriſtian country," and ſome other day appointed. He then deſcribes feelingly the hardſhips and miſery which are conſequent on that ſyſtem of law by which Slaves may be ſeized and ſold to the higheſt bidder for the debts of their maſter, without regard to kindred or connections, or to the grounds they may have cultivated, or the peculium they may have acquired, a practice by which almoſt all the horrors of the African Slave Trade are perpetuated in the iſlands; and he propoſes that the Slaves ſhould be attached to the ſoil as they were in the French iſlands. This is alſo Mr. LONG's opinion.

Now, Mr. EDWARDS was himſelf a planter; he had reſided long in Jamaica; and he was by no means diſpoſed to concede too much to the advocates for abolition; for he uniformly oppoſed them in Parliament. Yet it is from him we have theſe propoſals; not one of which, however, notwithſtanding the loud profeſſions of the Jamaica planters, appears as yet to have been, not to ſay carried into effect, but even ſeriouſly contemplated by them with a view to its adoption.

Page 80, line 21.

But we are told your Legiſlation here is fruitleſs; you never can aboliſh this traffick, without the leave of the Planters.] The Planters themſelves, however, are by no means ſo forward to declaim on the *impracticability* of aboliſhing the Slave Trade, as ſome of our orators at home. The whole of the reaſoning of the Legiſlature of Jamaica in the papers tranſmitted from that country, and preſented to the Houſe of Commons, proceeds on the unequivocal admiſſion of the practicability of aboliſhing the Slave Trade by

a prohibitory law. There is ſomething ſtrangely inconſiſtent, in the courſe which ſome perſons purſue on this ſubject. They affirm that if the Slave Trade is prohibited the iſlands will be ruined; population will decreaſe; the value of property will diminiſh; emancipation will follow, &c.: and yet they affirm with equal vehemence, that not one Slave leſs will be imported.

Page 90, line 22.

For the purpoſe of being purchaſed like ſo many head of cattle by your Planters.] Dr. Pickard's Notes on the Weſt Indies (ſee Note to page 46, line 30, *ſupra* p. 172.) ſhall furniſh ſome ſtriking illuſtrations of this remark, illuſtrations fully confirmed by the evidence adduced upon it before the Privy Council and the Houſe of Commons. *paſſim.*

"A few days ago," obſerves this reſpectable writer, "I had the opportunity of being preſent at a more regular ſale or market for Slaves than I had ſeen before, and here I witneſſed all the heart-rending diſtreſs attendant upon ſuch a ſcene. I ſaw numbers of our fellow-beings regularly bartered for gold, and transferred like cattle or any common merchandiſe, from one poſſeſſor to another. It was a ſight which European curioſity had rendered me deſirous to behold, although I had anticipated from it only a painful gratification. I may now ſay—*I have ſeen it!*—and while nature animates my breaſt with even the feebleſt ſpark of humanity, I can never forget it!

"The poor Africans who were to be ſold, were expoſed naked, in a large empty building, like an open barn. Thoſe who came with intention to purchaſe, minutely inſpected them, handled them, made them jump, and ſtamp with their feet, and throw out their arms and their legs; turned them about; looked into their mouths; and, according to the uſual rules of traffick with reſpect to cattle, examined them, and made them ſhew themſelves in a variety of ways, to try if they were ſound and healthy. All this was as diſtreſsful as humiliating, and tended to excite ſtrong averſion and diſguſt; but a wound, ſtill more ſevere, was inflicted on the feelings, by ſome of the purchaſers ſelecting only ſuch as their judgment led them to prefer, regardleſs of the bonds of nature and affection! The urgent

urgent appeals of friendſhip and attachment were unheeded; ſighs and tears made no impreſſion; and all the imploring looks, and penetrating expreſſions of grief were unavailing. Hungry commerce corroded even the golden chains of affection, and ſordid intereſt burſt every tie of nature aſunder. The huſband was taken from the wife, children ſeparated from their parents, and the lover torn from his miſtreſs, the companion was bought away from his friend, and the brother not ſuffered to accompany the ſiſter. In one part of the building was ſeen a wife clinging to her huſband, and beſeeching in the ſtrongeſt eloquence of nature not to be left behind him. Here was a ſiſter hanging upon the neck of her brother, and, with tears entreating to be led to the ſame home of captivity. There ſtood two brothers, enfolded in each others arms, mutually bewailing their threatened ſeparation. In other parts were friends, relatives, and companions, praying to be ſold to the ſame maſter, uſing ſigns to ſignify that they would be content with ſlavery, might they but toil together. Silent tears, deep ſighs, and heavy lamentations beſpoke the univerſal ſuffering of theſe poor blacks, and proved that nature was ever true to her feelings. Never was ſcene more diſtreſsful. Among theſe unhappy degraded Africans ſcarcely was there an unclouded countenance. Every feature was veiled in the ſilent gloom of woe, and ſorrowing nature poured forth in all the bitterneſs of affliction."

"When purchaſed, the Slaves were marked by placing a bit of ſtring, or of red or white tape round their arms or necks. One gentleman, who bought a conſiderable number of them, was proceeding to diſtinguiſh thoſe he had ſelected, by tying a bit of red tape round the neck, when I obſerved two negroes, who were ſtanding together entwined in each other's arms, watch him with great anxiety. Preſently he approached them, and after making his examination affixed the mark only to one of them. The other, with a look of unerring expreſſion, and with an impulſe of marked diſappointment, caſt his eyes up to the purchaſer, ſeeming to ſay—'And will you not have 'me too?'—then jumped, and danced, and ſtamped with his feet, and made other ſigns to ſignify that he alſo was

ſound and ſtrong, and worthy his choice. He was nevertheleſs paſſed by unregarded, upon which he turned again to his companion, his friend, brother, whichever he was, took him to his boſom, hung upon him, and in ſorrowful countenance expreſſed the ſtrongeſt marks of diſappointment and affliction. The feeling was mutual—it aroſe from reciprocal affection. His friend participated in his grief, and they both wept bitterly. Soon afterwards, on looking round to complete his purchaſe, the planter again paſſed that way, and not finding any one that better ſuited his purpoſe, he now hung the token of choice round the neck of the negro whom he had before diſregarded. All the powers of art could not have effected the change that followed; more genuine joy was never expreſſed. His countenance became enlivened, grief and ſadneſs vaniſhed, and flying into the arms of his friend, he careſſed him with warm embraces, then ſkipped, and jumped, and danced about, exhibiting all the pureſt ſigns of mirth and gratification. His companion, not leſs delighted, received him with reciprocal feelings—and a more pure and native ſympathy was never exhibited. Happy in being, again, aſſociated, they now retired apart from the crowd, and ſat down, in quiet contentment, hugging and kiſſing the red ſignal of bondage, like two attached and affectionate brothers—ſatisfied to toil out their days, for an unknown maſter, ſo they might but travel their journey of ſlavery together. In the afternoon of the ſame day I chanced to be preſent when another gentleman came to purchaſe ſome of the Slaves, who were not ſold in the morning. After looking through the lot he remarked that he did not ſee any who were of pleaſant countenance, and going on to make further objections, reſpecting their appearance, he was interrupted by the vender who remarked, that at that moment they were ſeen to great diſadvantage, as they looked worſe *'from having loſt their friends and aſſociates in the morning.'* Aye! truly, I could have replied, a very powerful reaſon why they are unfit for ſale this afternoon! If to be of ſmiling countenance were neceſſary to their being ſold, it were politic not to expoſe them for long to come. Still ſome were ſelected, and the mark of purchaſe being made,

made, the diſtreſsful ſcene of the morning was in a degree repeated.

" A few of the moſt ill-looking, only, now remained." ——" Theſe remained to a future day, and would probably be ſold, not to the planters, but to the boat-women, tailors, huckſters, or ſome of the inferior mechanics or ſhopkeepers of the town, at a price ſomewhat lower than that demanded for the more robuſt and well-looking; and, alas! though leaſt able to bear fatigue, theſe feeble beings would moſt likely be ſubjected to a far more heavy ſlavery than thoſe of ſtronger frame." Vol. II. p. 216—224.

Another ſcene of the ſame kind was afterwards witneſſed by Dr. PINCKARD, and is thus deſcribed by him.

" Not ſimply from curioſity, but from a deſire of acquiring inſtruction from whatever occurs of peculiar intereſt, I have again been led to be preſent at one of thoſe moſt humiliating ſcenes, a ſale of human merchandize, where I ſaw, what is here termed, a *prime cargo* of 300 men and women from the Gold Coaſt of Africa, all human beings like ourſelves, expoſed to public *vendue*, even as the herds of ſheep and oxen in Smithfield market! But although I had now been more than a year in the Weſt Indies, I was glad to find that my European feelings were not yet ſo entirely blunted, as to allow me to witneſs ſuch a ſcene without experiencing the painful ſenſations which naturally ariſe in the breaſt of an Engliſhman, upon ſeeing his fellow-creatures thus miſerably degraded.

" The crowd was as great as at a Coventry ſhew-fair; and amidſt the throng I obſerved many females, as well white as of colour, who, decked out in tinſel finery, had come to the *roupe* to buy ſlaves, either for themſelves, their maſters, or keepers. Infants too were brought to point the lucky finger to a ſable drudge for *little ſelf*, upon the ſame prejudice which leads mamma to take dear babe to a lottery office, to finger out the happy ticket, which is to make little miſſey's fortune!

" The poor blacks were not expoſed to public gaze upon a high ſtool, in order to be firſt examined, and then knocked down at the hammer, as at a Dutch ſale at

Berbiſche; but were divided into three great lots, according to their value; and, the price being fixed, the purchaſers were left to ſelect from whichever diviſion they might prefer. Boys from eleven to fourteen years of age ſold for 600 or 700 guilders. The price of the women was from 700 to 800 guilders; and of the men from 700 to 900; but a few of the ſtrongeſt were valued ſomewhat higher. The agent who conducted the ſale is a liberal man, poſſeſſed of humane ſentiments and a cultivated mind; but it is unfortunately *his calling* to deal in human fleſh; and he very juſtly remarked to me, that in following this occupation, it is neceſſary to *give an opiate* to the finer feelings of nature.

"The coarſe airs and indecent vulgarity exhibited by a negreſs, (who had probably been herſelf expoſed in a ſimilar manner) and a mulatto woman, her aſſociate, towards ſome of theſe poor African girls, were both ſtriking and diſguſting. Each of theſe cloudy nymphs had wheedled her lord to grant her the privilege of chooſing a ſlave, to be the immediate attendant of her dark-hued perſon; and in making their ſelection, they uſed as little delicacy in touching, turning about, and trying their fellow blacks, as a butcher would in examining a pen of any other ſort of black cattle in an open market. Common decency was outraged in theſe proceedings, which groſsly aggravated a ſcene, that, under its beſt colours, is moſt cruelly humiliating.

"I committed a heavy treſpaſs upon my feelings, by remaining for a conſiderable time at this ſale; but at length hurt and ſhocked at what I had witneſſed, and led into painful reflections upon the ſadly checquered lot of our ſpecies, I made my retreat from this market of human woe, where not only the laws of decorum are openly invaded, and the rules of propriety ſet at defiance, but where all the ſocial ties of our nature are broken down and bartered for gold.

"Amidſt a ſcene every way repugnant to humanity, I was pleaſed to remark that a general ſympathy was excited towards one particular family, whoſe appeals to the compaſſion of the multitude were not leſs powerful than their claims. The family conſiſted of a mother, three daughters,

ters, and a ſon. The parent, although the days of her youth were paſt, was ſtill a well looking woman; the children appeared to be from fourteen to twenty years of age: they were very like the mother, and ſtill more reſembled each other, being all of diſtinguiſhed face and figure, and remarkably the handſomeſt negroes of the whole cargo. Their diſtreſs, leſt they ſhould be ſeparated, and ſold to different maſters, was ſtrongly depicted upon their countenances, and expreſſed in ſuch lively and impreſſive appeals, that the whole crowd were, impulſively, led to commiſerate their ſufferings; and by univerſal conſent, they were removed from the three great lots, and placed in a ſeparate corner by themſelves, in order that they might all be ſold to the ſame maſter.

"Obſerving their extreme agitation, I was led particularly to notice their conduct, as influenced by the terror of being torn from each other, and I may truly ſay, that I witneſſed a juſt and faithful repreſentation of *the diſtreſſed mother*, and ſuch as might bid defiance even to the all-imitative powers of a SIDDONS: for the fears of the parent, leſt ſhe ſhould be ſeparated from her children, or thoſe from each other, were anxious and watchful beyond all that imagination could paint, or the moſt vivid fancy pourtray. When any one approached their little group, or chanced to look towards them with the attentive eye of a purchaſer, the children in broken ſobs, crouched nearer together, and the tearful mother, in agonizing impulſe, inſtantly fell down before the ſpectator, bowed herſelf to the earth, and kiſſed his feet: then alternately clinging to his legs, and preſſing her children to her boſom, ſhe fixed herſelf upon her knees, claſped her hands together, and, in an anguiſh, caſt up a look of humble petition which might have found its way even to the heart of a Caligula! And thus, in nature's trueſt language, did the afflicted parent urge the ſtrongeſt appeal to his compaſſion, while ſhe implored the purchaſer, in dealing out to her the hard lot of ſlavery, to ſpare her the additional pang of being torn from her children; to forbear expoſing her to the accumulated agonies which would reſult from forcing them aſunder, whom the all-wiſe Diſpoſer of

events

events had bound together by the moſt ſacred ties of nature and affection." (Vol. iii. p. 353—358.)

Page 92, line 11.

Bryan Edwards, himſelf a planter and a dealer in ſlaves, and an advocate for the continuance of the Traffick, tells you, &c.] The words of BRYAN EDWARDS are theſe. "I am "perſuaded that Mr. WILBERFORCE has been very rightly "informed as to the manner in which ſlaves are generally "procured. The intelligence I have collected from my "own negroes abundantly confirms Mr. WILBERFORCE's "account; and I have not the ſmalleſt doubt that in "Africa, the effects of this trade are preciſely ſuch as he "repreſents them to be. The whole, or the greateſt part, "of that immenſe Continent, is a field of warfare and deſo-"lation, a wilderneſs in which the inhabitants are wolves "towards each other. That this ſcene of oppreſſion, "fraud, treachery and blood, if not originally occaſioned, "is in part, I will not ſay wholly, upheld by the Slave "Trade, I dare not diſpute. Every man in the Sugar "Iſlands may be convinced that it is ſo, who will inquire "of any African negroes on their firſt arrival concerning "the circumſtances of their captivity. The aſſertion that "a great many of theſe are criminals and convicts, is "mockery and inſult." Speech delivered in Jamaica Houſe of Aſſembly.

Page 92, line 38.

It is ſaid that the negroes who are purchaſed by us would be put to death if we did not buy them.] No proof whatever has been produced of this aſſertion, while there is much evidence of a contrary tendency to be found in the Privy Council Reports; (particularly p. 18, 33, and 35) and in the publications of travellers both ancient and modern, particularly BOSMAN (p. 155,) and PARK. This laſt writer ſtates (p. 26), that if there is no market for the ſlaves who are brought down from the interior to be ſold, they are chained together in pairs and employed in the labours of the field. Not one word of putting them to death! And he obſerves, that it ſometimes happens that a humane maſter incorporates them among his domeſtics, (p. 23);

(p. 23); after which they cannot be ſold without being firſt brought to a public trial. (p. 23, and 287.) See alſo the evidence taken before the Houſe of Lords in 1799, pp. 235—335.

Page 94, line 24.

The meaſures taken by the Legiſlature for alleviating the ſufferings of thoſe wretched beings on the middle paſſage have failed of their intended effect.] From papers laid on the table of the Houſe of Lords, in 1799, it appears that in the year 1791, (three years after the paſſing of the *Slave carrying Act*,) of fifteen thouſand ſeven hundred and fifty-four ſlaves carried from the coaſt of Africa, one thouſand three hundred and ſeventy-eight died during the middle paſſage, the average length of which was fifty-one days; making a mortality of eight and three-fourths per cent. in that time, or of ſixty-two and one half per cent. per annum: a rate of mortality which would depeople the earth in a year and ſeven months.

The amount of the mortality in 1792 was, however, ſtill more enormous. Of thirty-one thouſand five hundred and fifty-four ſlaves carried from Africa, no fewer than five thouſand four hundred and thirteen died on the paſſage, making ſomewhat more that ſeventeen per cent. in fifty-one days. Had the voyage been prolonged, and the ſlaves continued to die in the ſame proportion, the whole number would have been completely ſwept away in about ten months.

Page 95, line 16.

In the paſſage of the negroes from the coaſt of Africa, there is a greater portion of human miſery condenſed within a ſmaller ſpace than has ever yet been found in any other place on the face of this globe.] In order to illuſtrate the truth of this aſſertion, it will be neceſſary to ſtate, that by the Slave Trade regulating Act of 1799, the greateſt number of Slaves which any ſhip ſhall be allowed to carry is to be aſcertained by multiplying the greateſt length of the lower deck, meaſured in feet, by its greateſt breadth, and dividing the product by eight. The annexed plate repreſents the lower deck of a ſhip, whoſe greateſt length is 100 feet, and its greateſt breadth 25 feet four inches. Theſe two ſums multiplied together and divided by 8 give

317 for the greateſt number of Slaves which ſuch a ſhip can carry. Now let the number of men in ſuch a cargo be eſtimated at 124, the number of women at 83, and the number of boys and girls at 110;* and let there be allowed for each man ſix feet by one foot four inches, for each woman five feet ten inches by one foot four inches, and for each boy and girl indifferently five feet by one foot two inches; then it will be found that the whole number which can be ſtowed on the lower deck of ſuch a veſſel, will be 124 men, 83 women, and 83 boys or girls, in all 290:—ſo that of the number which the Act allows to be carried there will ſtill remain 27, who unleſs they are heaped above their companions, muſt be ſtowed in the captain's cabin, or in ſome other part of the ſhip. And yet this Act is juſtly deemed an Act of mercy, when compared with the mode in which it had been uſual to ſtow theſe human cargoes. It ought to be known that the Liverpool man-merchants had ingeniouſly contrived, in the courſe of the laſt year, to elude the humane proviſions of the regulating Act, ſo as to obtain licences to carry a fourth or a fifth more than the legal number; but the iniquity was detected, and the vigilance of the preſent Treaſury Board has ſince impoſed effectual reſtraints on the inhumanity and cupidity of theſe Traffickers in human fleſh and blood.

It is not deemed neceſſary to produce any freſh proofs of the horrors of the middle paſſage. Any one who will open his eyes on the evidence given before the Privy Council and the Houſe of Commons, may be eaſily ſatisfied on this head.

Page 95, line 38.

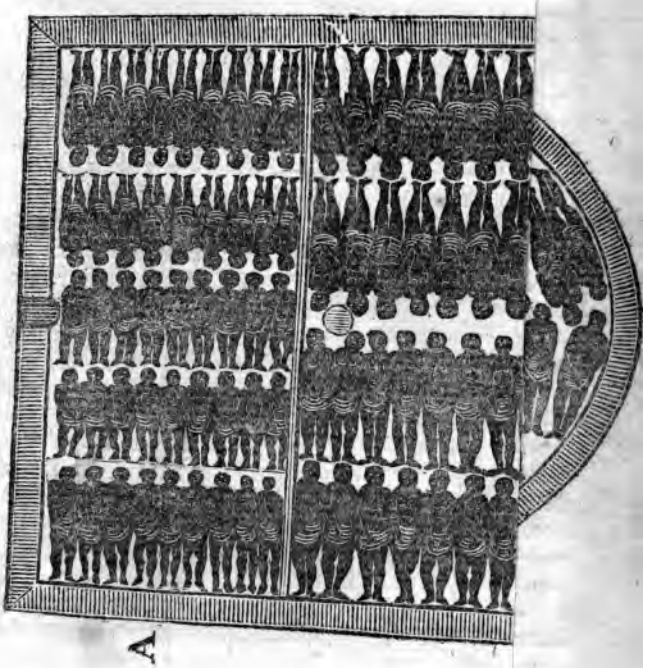
See the mortality it creates among your ſeamen.] See note to page 17, line 39. *Supra* p. 157.

Page 96, line 34.

Riſing in the morning, and lying down at night, under the laſh of the whip.] That horrid feature in our ſyſtem of colonial bondage, the compulſion of labour by the preſent

* This eſtimate is more favourable to the Slave Trader than the ordinary diſtribution of a cargo of Slaves would warrant.

terror



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terror or phyſical impulſe of the cart whip, though ſome have affected to doubt, and others to deny its exiſtence, is, if poſſible, more clearly eſtabliſhed than any other circumſtance connected with this dreadful Traffick. The Author of a work entitled, "The Criſis of the Sugar "Colonies;" (Sold by Hatchard) a work no leſs remarkable for the ability with which it is executed, than for the exactneſs with which its predictions relative to St. Domingo have been verified, has drawn, with a melancholy fidelity, a ſtriking picture of Weſt Indian Slavery, of which he had been for years a near and painful obſerver. The account given by this writer is as follows.

"That Weſt India Slaves, whether French or Engliſh, are the property of their maſter, and transferable by him, like his inanimate effects; that in general he is abſolute arbiter of the extent and the mode of their labour, and of the quantum of ſubſiſtence to be given in return for it; and that they are diſciplined and puniſhed at his diſcretion, direct privation of life or member excepted; theſe are prominent features, and ſufficiently known, of this ſtate of ſlavery.

"Nor is the manner in which the labour of Slaves is conducted, a matter of leſs publicity. Every man who has heard any thing of Weſt India affairs, is acquainted with the term *negro-drivers*; and knows, or may know, that the Slaves in their ordinary field labour are *driven* to their work; and during their work, in the ſtrict ſenſe of the term, "driven," as uſed in Europe; though this ſtatement no more involves an intimation, that in practice the laſh is inceſſantly, or with any needleſs frequency, applied to their back, than the phraſe "to drive a team of "horſes," imports that the waggoner is continually ſmacking his whip. I uſe the compariſon merely as deſcriptive, and not in cenſure of the Weſt India ſyſtem; with the accuſation, or defence, of which, in a moral view, my argument, let it be obſerved, has no neceſſary connection. It is enough for my purpoſe, that in point of fact, no feature of Weſt India ſlavery is better known, or leſs liable to controverſy or doubt, than this eſtabliſhed method in which field labour is enforced.

" But a nearer and more particular view of this leading characteriſtic, may be neceſſary to thoſe who have never ſeen a gang of negroes at their work.

" When employed in the labour of the field, as, for example, in *holeing a cane-piece, i. e.* turning up the ground with hoes into parallel trenches, for the reception of the cane plants, the Slaves, of both ſexes, from twenty, perhaps, to fourſcore in number, are drawn out in a line, like troops on a parade, each with a hoe in his hand, and cloſe to them in the rear is ſtationed a driver, or ſeveral drivers, in number duly proportioned to that of the gang. Each of theſe drivers, who are always the moſt active and vigorous negroes on the eſtate, has in his hand, or coiled round his neck, from which by extending the handle, it can be diſengaged in a moment, a long thick and ſtrongly plaited whip, called a *cart whip*; the report of which is as loud, and the laſh as ſevere, as thoſe of the whips in common uſe with our waggoners, and which he has authority to apply at the inſtant when his eye perceives an occaſion, without any previous warning.—Thus diſpoſed, their work begins, and continues without interruption for a certain number of hours, during which, at the peril of the drivers, an adequate portion of land muſt be holed.

"As the trenches are generally rectilinear, and the whole line of holers advance together, it is neceſſary that every hole or ſection of the trench ſhould be finiſhed in equal time with the reſt; and if any one or more negroes were allowed to throw in the hoe with leſs rapidity or energy than their companions in other parts of the line, it is obvious that the work of the latter muſt be ſuſpended; or elſe, ſuch part of the trench as is paſſed over by the former, will be more imperfectly formed than the reſt. It is, therefore, the buſineſs of the drivers, not only to urge forward the whole gang with ſufficient ſpeed, but ſeduloufly to watch that all in the line, whether male or female, old or young, ſtrong or feeble, work as nearly as poſſible in equal time, and with equal effect. The tardy ſtroke muſt be quickened, and the languid invigorated; and the whole line made to *dreſs*, in the military phraſe, as it advances. No breathing time, no reſting on the *hoe*, no pauſe of languor, to be repaid by briſker exertion

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on return to work, can be allowed to individuals: all muſt work, or pauſe together.

"I have taken this ſpecies of work as the ſtrongeſt example: but other labours of the plantation are conducted upon the ſame principle, and as nearly as may be practicable, in the ſame manner. (p. 8—11.)

"In ſhort, with a few exceptions, the compulſion of labour, by the phyſical impulſe or preſent terror of the whip is univerſal; and it would be as extraordinary a ſight in a Weſt India Iſland to ſee a line or file of negroes without a driver behind them, as it would be in England to meet a team of horſes on a turnpike road without a carman or waggoner." (p. 13.)

Dreadfully revolting as this picture is to every feeling of humanity, it is but a plain unvarniſhed ſtatement of facts; facts abundantly confirmed by every ſpecies of proof of which the ſubject is capable. See the Privy Council Report. See alſo the evidence taken before the Houſe of Commons in 1790, Part ii. pp. 190, 198—200, 212, 231, 248, 269, 271, 286, 302, 330; & in 1791, pp. 47, 70, 78, 189, &c. &c. &c.

But it may be alleged that a conſiderable time has elapſed ſince this evidence was obtained, and that therefore it cannot be conſidered as giving a fair picture of the exiſting ſtate of things in the Weſt Indies. Let us then turn to the work of Dr. PINCKARD, already referred to, and ſee what confirmation it affords to that dreadful feature of Weſt India bondage, the driving ſyſtem. This reſpectable writer, in deſcribing the firſt view he had of Barbadoes, incidentally ſhews that a practice, the exiſtence of which, ſome, even in the Britiſh Parliament, have been diſpoſed to diſpute, forms one of the ordinary characteriſtics of a Weſt India landſcape.

"Soon we diſcovered it to be the northern point of the iſland of Barbadoes; but Carliſle Bay is to the ſouth: we had therefore to coaſt round nearly half the extent of the iſland, before we could reach the harbour. This day afforded us a good opportunity of viewing the iſland. We ſtood near in, and could obſerve, diſtinctly, the objects on ſhore. I took my ſeat upon deck, and with an anxious eye, aided by the teleſcope, minutely examined every

thing we paſſed. The mind, ever active, generally forms to itſelf ſome image of the things we hear ſpoken of, before any opportunity occurs of ſeeing them. Often the picture is very incorrect and extravagant; but upon the preſent occaſion I was pleaſed to find that I had formed to myſelf a tolerably accurate copy of the Weſt Indies, from the deſcriptions I had heard and read. In particular *the appearance of the fields, and of the* SLAVES LABOURING WITH THE WHIP AT THEIR BACKS, *had been painted very correctly in my imagination;* for I *now ſaw them, in reality, what my mind had long repreſented them.*" (vol. i. p. 193.)

The ſame ſhameful but univerſal practice is thus noticed by him, on another occaſion, while in the ſame iſland.

"At one ſpot, in the courſe of our ride, we had our attention arreſted by obſerving a party of four, almoſt naked, females working in a cane-field. Curioſity would not allow us to paſs on, without devoting to them a moment of particular regard. We, therefore, went a little off the road to approach them nearer; when we found that they were labouring with the hoe, to dig, or cut up the ground, preparatory to the planting of ſugar; and that a ſtout robuſt looking man, apparently white, was following them, holding a whip at their backs.—Obſerving that he was the only one of the party who was idle, we enquired why he did not partake of the taſk, and were told, in reply, that it was not his buſineſs; that he had only to keep the women at work, and to make them feel the weight of the whip, if they grew idle, or relaxed from their labour.

"Impulſive nature fluſhed at this information, and we felt ſhocked and indignant, at ſeeing a man, apparently ſtrong enough to do as much work as the whole of the four, employed in the ſole occupation of brandiſhing the whip over theſe poor degraded females." (vol. i. p. 282, 283.)

Page 97, line 5.

Every extremity ſhort of murder, may often terminating in murder itſelf.] See Note to p. 46, line 30, (p. 166).

Page 98, line 38.

After you have paſſed the law how are you to execute it?] This part of Lord GRENVILLE's ſpeech furniſhes a complete anſwer to that common defence of the Weſt India ſyſtem, which is founded on the humane proviſions of Colonial enactments in favour of Slaves. Such enactments impoſe but a ſlight tax on the humanity of the legiſlators, while thoſe wretched beings, in whoſe favour they are profeſſedly framed, have no poſſible means of giving them efficiency.

Page 103, line 27.

Mr. Long's opinion]. See Note to p. 41, line 10, (p. 166.)

Page 106, line 13.

The continuance of the African importations was one of the great cauſes of the inſurrection and ſubſequent miſeries of that devoted iſland, St. Domingo]. The inſurrection in St. Domingo commenced in 1791. BARRE ST. VENANT, an author of great credit, in his work entitled, *Colonies Modernes*, ſtates (p. 81), that the importation in the two years immediately preceding, amounted to ſixty thouſand!! The average export of France from Africa, for 1786, 1787, and 1788, is given by ARNOULD (*Balance de Commerce*, Part ii. §. 3.) at thirty thouſand; and this ſtatement is confirmed by the official returns, which make the importation for the year 1787, 30,839, and for 1788, 29,506, (See *Rapport a l'Aſſemblee Legiſlative*, 1790, and *Edwards' St. Domingo*, Appendix). Thus in the five years immediately preceding the revolution, about 150,000 negroes had been imported into this infatuated iſland, of whom, if the uſual proportions were preſerved, near two-thirds muſt have been male adults. Can we wonder at the ſcenes which have ſince paſſed there, when we combine with this circumſtance the abſurd, perfidious, and cruel proceedings of the French government towards the Colonies, and the manner in which it has uniformly ſported with the hopes and fears of the negro race?

On the ſubject of St. Domingo, a pamphlet entitled *The Opportunity; or Reaſons for an Alliance with St. Domingo*,

by the author of *The Criſis of the Sugar Colonies*, and ſold by HATCHARD, deſerves an attentive peruſal.

Page 112, line 7.

The Noble Baron admits that Slavery is a thing which at preſent at leaſt you cannot aboliſh.] It is admitted that SLAVERY is an evil which cannot be directly aboliſhed by Parliamentary enactments, therefore no attempt is made thus to aboliſh it. But it is affirmed that the SLAVE TRADE is an evil which may be immediately aboliſhed by Parliament, not only without detriment, but with advantage; and therefore the efforts of the friends of humanity inſtead of being vainly directed to the accompliſhment of the former object, are wiſely directed to that of the latter.

Page 112, line 22.

A ſtate of Slavery has exiſted in Africa from the earlieſt times]. But admitting that a ſtate of SLAVERY has exiſted in Africa from the earlieſt times, (the nature of that ſlavery will be preſently ſeen) no argument can thence be drawn in favour of the antiquity, any more than in favour of the juſtice and humanity, of the African SLAVE TRADE.

LEO AFRICANUS, an hiſtorian of credit and intelligence, who lived in the fifteenth century, about the time the Portugueze firſt purſued their diſcoveries along the ſhores of Africa, in ſpeaking of the nations inhabiting the Weſtern coaſt of that continent, ſays, "We are not acquainted "with them, for none of our people (the Moors) have "travelled thither, by reaſon of the length of the journey "and the vaſt diſtance, and alſo the diverſity of language "and religion. They have no dealings with us." It is evident therefore that no Slave Trade was at that time carried on from the Weſtern coaſt of Africa to the ſhores of the Mediterranean; conſequently that the European nations have not, as has been alleged, merely diverted the Trade in Slaves from its ancient channel, but have themſelves originated that Trade, with all its enormities.

This view of the caſe is confirmed by Mr. SMITH, a ſervant of the Royal African Company, himſelf employed in the Slave Trade; who, in 1726, thus expreſſes himſelf: (ſee his Voyage, p. 266) "The diſcerning natives account

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" it their greateſt unhappineſs that they were ever viſited " by the Europeans. They ſay that we *Chriſtians* intro- " duced the Traffick of Slaves, and that before our coming " they lived in peace: but, ſay they, it is obſervable that " wherever *Chriſtianity* comes, there come with it a " ſword, a gun, powder and ball."

It was in the year 1435 that the Portugueze, landing to the Southward of Cape Bojador, attacked and wounded ſome of the inhabitants, and from that time the expeditions of the Portugueze to the African coaſt were a continued ſeries of rapine, murder, and kidnapping. To prove this it is only neceſſary to look into any authentic collection of voyages to the Coaſt of Africa during the fifteenth century. It was not however till the year 1517, that the Slave Trade aſſumed a regular form. In that year the Portugueze undertook to ſupply the Spaniards with negroes to re-people America. The preciſe time when the Engliſh Slave Trade commenced is not known; but ſo late as the year 1688, the number of Slaves exported by our Royal African Company from Africa, did not amount to 6000 annually. In 1697, the trade was thrown open by Act of Parliament (being the firſt recognition of this Trade to be found in our ſtatute book) and the annual exportation was at once nearly doubled. In 1712, the number of Britiſh ſhips engaged in the Slave Trade was 33: but ſo rapidly did that Trade increaſe in the ſucceeding thirteen years, that in 1725, the number of ſhips had riſen to 200.

But ſtill it is ſaid that SLAVERY has exiſted in Africa from time immemorial, and that the transfer of the Slaves from an African to an European maſter, cannot be regarded as any cruelty. Now, to paſs by for the preſent the means by which the European Slave Trade is ſupplied with its victims, and the miſeries which they are fated to endure in the middle paſſage; let the queſtion be conſidered merely as involving the comparative diſadvantages of African and Weſt India bondage. Of the Weſt India ſyſtem ſome of the more remarkable features have already been pointed out.* It now remains to contraſt with theſe what we

* See Notes *ſupra* pp. 163, 166, and 192.

know

know from indubitable teſtimony reſpecting the nature of the bondage prevalent in Africa.

Mr. MOORE, who was factor to the Royal African Company in the river Gambia, about the year 1730, obſerves, "Some people have a good many houſe Slaves, "which is their greateſt glory, and they live ſo well and "eaſy, that it is ſometimes a very hard matter to know "the Slaves from their maſters or miſtreſſes; they very "often being better clothed, eſpecially the females, who "have ſometimes coral, amber, and ſilver, about their "hands and wriſts, to the value of twenty or thirty pounds "ſterling. Many of the Slaves are born in their families. "There is a whole village near Boncoe, of two hundred "people, who are all the wives, ſlaves, or children, of one "man. I never heard of but one that ever ſold a family "Slave, except for ſuch crimes as would have made them "to be ſold, had they been free. If there are many "family Slaves, and one of them commits a crime, the "maſter cannot ſell him without the joint conſent of the "reſt; for, if he does, they will all run away, and be "protected by the next kingdom to which they fly." p. 110.

Many proofs equally concluſive might be extracted from the old writers, as well as from the evidence taken before the Privy Council and the Houſe of Commons, but they are omitted for the ſake of brevity. MUNGO PARK's authority it may be proper to adduce, becauſe its weight is fully admitted in the very page of the Debates to which this note refers. He ſtates (p. 23) that "A Mandingo maſter can neither deprive his Slave of life, nor ſell him to a ſtranger, without bringing him to a public trial. This extends to native and domeſtic ſlaves; that is, to all who are born in a ſtate of ſlavery. And he adds, that it ſometimes happens that thoſe brought down from the interior for ſale, and who conſiſt of captives taken in war, or perſons enſlaved for crimes, are incorporated among the native Slaves, when their children, if not themſelves, become entitled to the privileges of the native claſs." This fact he repeats at p. 287, after obſerving, what, indeed, is quite deciſive of the queſtion we are now conſidering, "In all the laborious occupations above deſcribed, the

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maſter and his ſlave work together without any diſtinction of ſuperiority.

In the evidence taken before the Houſe of Lords, in 1799, it is ſtated by one of the witneſſes (p. 289), "I have frequently made the attempt to aſcertain the proportion which the Slaves in Africa bear to the Freemen; but ſo much alike in their appearance, in their treatment, and in the conduct obſerved towards them, are the domeſtic Slaves in that country, and the Free men, that I found it impracticable to aſcertain that proportion." "I never was able to diſcriminate between the ſon and the domeſtic ſlave of a chief." And again, (p. 327) "I have univerſally underſtood from maſters themſelves that they had no right to *ſell* domeſtic ſlaves, and, above all, that they had no right to ſell children born in the country without a ſpecific crime being alleged againſt them."

Theſe teſtimonies, and innumerable others which might be adduced, eſtabliſh, incontrovertibly, the almoſt incalculable diſtance, which ſeparates our ſyſtem of colonial bondage from the domeſtic ſervitude of Africa. Indeed if the ſame degree of grinding oppreſſion exiſted in Africa as in the Weſt Indies, whence could the murderous Slave Trade, and the no leſs murderous ſyſtem which that Trade feeds in the Weſt Indies, be ſupplied with their ſixty or eighty thouſand annual victims, independently of at leaſt an equal number of perſons, who muſt almoſt neceſſarily be ſacrificed that theſe may be procured? In Africa, alſo, let it further be remembered, there is no difference of colour between the maſter and his ſlave. In the iſlands, on the contrary, the difference is ſo plain and obvious, that many Weſt Indians ſcruple not to avow their belief that the negroes are an inferior order of beings to their maſters; a link in the chain which connects the Homo Sapiens with the brute; a ſpecies of Oran-outang, differing from their brethren of the woods only in poſſeſſing the faculty of ſpeech*. Can we then wonder, that when even their claim to be conſidered as *human* is queſtioned, they ſhould not be treated as men, and ſhould be denied the common rights of hu-

* See Long's Hiſtory of Jamaica.

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know from indubitable teſtimony reſpecting the nature of the bondage prevalent in Africa.

Mr. MOORE, who was factor to the Royal African Company in the river Gambia, about the year 1730, obſerves, "Some people have a good many houſe Slaves, "which is their greateſt glory, and they live ſo well and "eaſy, that it is ſometimes a very hard matter to know "the Slaves from their maſters or miſtreſſes; they very "often being better clothed, eſpecially the females, who "have ſometimes coral, amber, and ſilver, about their "hands and wriſts, to the value of twenty or thirty pounds "ſterling. Many of the Slaves are born in their families. "There is a whole village near Boncoe, of two hundred "people, who are all the wives, ſlaves, or children, of one "man. I never heard of but one that ever ſold a family "Slave, except for ſuch crimes as would have made them "to be ſold, had they been free. If there are many "family Slaves, and one of them commits a crime, the "maſter cannot ſell him without the joint conſent of the "reſt; for, if he does, they will all run away, and be "protected by the next kingdom to which they fly." p. 110.

Many proofs equally concluſive might be extracted from the old writers, as well as from the evidence taken before the Privy Council and the Houſe of Commons, but they are omitted for the ſake of brevity. MUNGO PARK's authority it may be proper to adduce, becauſe its weight is fully admitted in the very page of the Debates to which this note refers. He ſtates (p. 23) that "A Mandingo maſter can neither deprive his Slave of life, nor ſell him to a ſtranger, without bringing him to a public trial. This extends to native and domeſtic ſlaves; that is, to all who are born in a ſtate of ſlavery. And he adds, that it ſometimes happens that thoſe brought down from the interior for ſale, and who conſiſt of captives taken in war, or perſons enſlaved for crimes, are incorporated among the native Slaves, when their children, if not themſelves, become entitled to the privileges of the native claſs." This fact he repeats at p. 287, after obſerving, what, indeed, is quite deciſive of the queſtion we are now conſidering, "*In all* the laborious occupations above deſcribed, the

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* See Long's Hiſtory of Jamaica.

manity? Under ſuch circumſtances they are, naturally enough, excluded from the pale of that ſympathy, which a ſenſe of a common nature and a common extraction inſpires; and which, in minds not habitually regulated by religion, is the greateſt and ſureſt ſource of benevolence, and the beſt guard againſt the abuſe of a deſpotic authority.

Page 112, line 37.

Mungo Park's opinion is, that the Abolition of the Slave Trade, and, above all, the ſudden Abolition of it, would not be productive of good effects to the inhabitants of that Continent.] After going over the whole of MUNGO PARK's Journal with great care, it does not appear to contain any ſuch ſentiment as is here aſcribed to him. The only paſſage which bears even a remote reſemblance to it is the following. "If my ſentiments ſhould be required concerning the effect which a diſcontinuance of that commerce would produce on the manners of the natives, I ſhould have no heſitation in obſerving that, in the preſent unenlightened ſtate of their minds, my opinion is, the effect would neither be *ſo* extenſive, or *ſo* beneficial, as many wiſe and worthy perſons expect." Surely this is a very different thing from affirming that the Abolition would not be productive of good effects, while nothing is ſaid of a *ſudden* Abolition. But even if Mr. PARK's opinion had been, as it is not adverſe to Abolition, it could have weighed little, when directly oppoſed by every fact which he has placed on record. On this point however, more will be ſaid hereafter.

Page 115, line 19.

How has Slavery been aboliſhed? It has been aboliſhed, not by an Act of Parliament, but by moral improvement, which prepared men's minds for it.] In perfect conſiſtency with this opinion, it is not propoſed by any one to aboliſh SLAVERY by Act of Parliament, but to leave its Abolition, agreeably to the recommendation of the Noble Lord, to that moral improvement, which will be the conſequence of an Abolition of the SLAVE TRADE. See Note to Page 112, line 7, *ſupra* p. 198.

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Page 117, line 21.

The Learned and Reverend Prelate read a variety of extracts, &c.] It having been impoſſible to follow his Lordſhip in this part of his ſpeech, ſo as to cite, with confidence, the very authorities produced by him, it became neceſſary merely to allude to them in a general way. As it is highly deſirable, however, to ſupply, as far as is poſſible, the deficiency in the Learned Prelate's ſpeech, this note will contain a brief ſtatement of ſome of the evidence by which the repreſentations given of the Slave Trade by his Lordſhip, as well as by Lord GRENVILLE and the other advocates for Abolition, are undeniably ſubſtantiated. And firſt with reſpect to *wars between neighbouring ſtates.*

Monſieur BRUE, Director General of the French Senegal Company, who reſided in Africa, during eleven years towards the cloſe of the 17th Century, thus writes, "The Europeans are far from deſiring to act as peace-"makers amongſt them, (viz. the nations of Africa.) It "would be too contrary to their intereſts; for the only "object of their wars is to carry off Slaves, and as theſe "make the principal part of their traffic, they would be "apprehenſive of drying up the ſource of it, were they to "encourage theſe people to live well together." (Vol. v. p. 133.) Again, "The neighbourhood of the Damel and "Tin keep them perpetually at war, the benefit of which "accrues to the Company, who buy all the priſoners "made on either ſide, and the more there are to ſell, the "greater is their profit; for the only end of their arma-"ments is to make captives to ſell them to white traders.", (ib. p. 115.) "They have every thing they wiſh to aim "at from their wars, when they are able to make captives "from one another. Avarice, and the deſire of making "Slaves, are often the veritable motives for going to "war." (Vol. iv. p. 217.)

The teſtimony of Monſieur BRUE, not an advocate, let it be remembered, for the Abolition of the Slave Trade, but a Director General of that commerce, is fully confirmed by LE MAIRE, BARBOT, BOSMAN, SMITH, and all the old writers. They concur in ſtating not only that wars are entered into for the ſole purpoſe of making Slaves, but that they are fomented by Europeans, with a

view to that object. To the ſame effect is the teſtimony given before the Privy Council by Dr. SPAARMAN (p. 17.) Mr. POPLET (p. 18.), Major General ROOKE (p. 19.), and Sir GEORGE YOUNG (p. 24.). Even Mr. DEVAYNES, who was himſelf a Slave Trader, and who is ſtill an advocate for that Trade, *ſuppoſes*, "that wars are ſometimes entered into *for the purpoſe* of making Slaves." It would be endleſs to cite the evidence in proof of this point, which was given before the Houſe of Commons in 1790 and 1791, and it is the leſs neceſſary to do ſo, as a faithful abridgement of that evidence may eaſily be obtained. The reader is particularly referred to the Evidence taken in 1790, pp. 4, 22, 30, 46, 101, 168, 205, 293, 314, 583, &c. and to the evidence taken in 1791, pp. 16, 114, &c. MUNGO PARK ſtates war to be the moſt general and productive ſource of Slavery (p. 294.), and he admits (p. 291.), that wars are often entered into *for the purpoſe of plundering or ſtealing men.*

But the Slave Trade not only foments wars between neighbouring nations, but *gives birth to the moſt dreadful outrages by kings on their own ſubjects.* Monſieur BRUE remarks, (Vol. iv. p. 147.), that "the negro "kings have not always Slaves to treat with, but they "have always a ſure and ready way of ſupplying their "deficiency; that is by making inroads upon their own "ſubjects, carrying them off, and ſelling them, for which "they never want pretenſions, in order to juſtify their pil-"lage and rapine." And then he ſtates an inſtance, in which, in order to trade with M. BRUE himſelf, the king of Damel made incurſions on his own ſubjects, ſeized about 300 of them, and then ſent word that he was ready to trade with him. Labat ſays, (Vol. iv. p. 351.) that the king of Barrè, when he wants Slaves for the Europeans, ſends quietly a troop of his guards to ſurround a village, and to ſeize ſuch a number of people as he orders them to do, who are immediately bound, and ſent to the factories or ſhips, after which they are never heard of. It ſometimes happens that the depredators are reſiſted, and if they are overcome and taken, they are carried before the king, "who denies having given them any ſuch commiſſion, "and immediately condemns them to be ſold as Slaves,

"for

" for his own profit." Mr. MOORE, a Factor to the English Royal African Company about the year 1730, a writer of acknowledged credit, and, it will alſo be admitted, a very competent witneſs with reſpect to the real nature of the Slave Trade ſays, (p. 65.) " Whenever the king of " Barſally wants goods or brandy, he ſends a meſſenger " to the Governor at James Fort, to deſire he would ſend " a ſloop there with a cargo. This news being not at all " unwelcome, the Governor ſends accordingly. Againſt " the arrival of the ſloop, the king goes and ranſacks ſome " of his enemies' towns, ſeizing the people, and ſelling " them for ſuch commodities as he is in want of. In " caſe he is not at war with any neighbouring king, *he* " *then falls upon one of his own towns*, which are numerous, " and uſes them in the very ſame manner. He very often " goes with ſome of his troops by a town in the day-time, " and returns in the night, and ſets fire to three parts of " it, and ſets guards to the fourth, to ſeize the people as " they run out from the fire. He ties their arms be- " hind them, and marches them to the place where he " ſells them." He then gives us a practical illuſtration of his general ſtatement. " Yeſterday, 20th March, 1732, " the king fell upon one of his own towns, and having " taken a good many priſoners, brought them along with " him, with intent to ſell them." To the ſame effect is the teſtimony of LOYER, BOSMAN, and ATKINS, among the old writers, as well as of a great number of perſons who had reſided in Africa, and who were examined before the Privy Council and the Houſe of Commons. See P. C. R. p. 16—47. and Houſe of Commons Evidence, at the pages referred to under the preceding head, and many other places.

The next head of proof, which may be entitled *kidnapping* or *manſtealing*, will ſhew that not only does the Slave Trade inſtigate one nation to make war on another, and kings on their own ſubjects, but that it incites individual Africans to ſeize, and ſell to the Europeans, any of their countrymen of whom they can poſſeſs themſelves either by force or fraud. Here it will be leſs neceſſary to quote ancient writers, although ſeveral of them, particularly ATKINS and BOSMAN, are full on this point, becauſe

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MUNGO PARK, whom the friends of the Slave Trade claim to be on their ſide, aſſures us that the practice is ſtill extenſively prevalent in Africa. He deſcribes the natives of that Continent (p. 294,) as going out often for the purpoſe of *plundering or ſtealing* men, not only in bodies but ſingly; and when a convenient opportunity preſents itſelf, "He then, tyger-like, ſprings upon his prey, drags "his victim into the thicket, and in the night carries him "off as a ſlave." See for farther proof of this practice, the Houſe of Commons Evidence, at the pages already referred to, and at various other paſſages; one of which (evidence for 1790, p 78,) deſerves to be particularly adverted to. Mr. NORRIS, the Liverpool delegate, who had traded for many years in ſlaves on the Coaſt of Africa, is there proved to have ſaid, "that on inquiry into the hiſtory of thoſe whom he had taken from Africa in his own veſſels, their almoſt univerſal anſwer was, that they were kidnapped either as they were travelling or fiſhing, or cultivating their little ſpots." See alſo the teſtimony of BRYAN EDWARDS, in note to page 92, line 11, *ſupra* p. 190.

But it is not by the natives of Africa alone that theſe enormities are practiſed, but *by the European traders*. The hiſtory of the diſcovery of Africa is a hiſtory of the depredations of the Portugueze. The *Engliſh* Slave Trade commenced with the ſeizure by a Captain HAWKINS of a number of people at Sierra Leone, whom he carried off with him to the Weſt Indies. But even after the Slave Trade had ſettled into its preſent regular form, Mr. BRUE informs us that, in order to procure ſlaves, "the French have been forced ſometimes to make uſe of violent means themſelves; and not being able to get the princes to diſcharge the loans they had borrowed from the Company, they have pillaged ſome village, ſeized the inhabitants, and carried them off for ſlaves." LABAT mentions, that a Captain of a French man of war, at the ſuggeſtion of a French trader, pillaged one of the Beſſago Iſlands. (vol. v. p. 182.) DAPPER acquaints us that the whites were in the practice under pretence of friendſhip of carrying off the Feloops. (p. 240.) ATKINS gives an account (p. 40,) *of a viſit* which he paid to ſome traders at Sierra Leone,

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who were much given to kidnapping; and relates a horrid inſtance of their enormities in the hiſtory of a Captain TOMBA, which however is too long to be tranſcribed. The ſame author ſtates (p. 58,) that Cape Meſurado had often ſuffered by the treachery of ſhips. SNELGRAVE, NYENDAEL, SNOCK, BOSMAN, BARBOT, and PHILLIPS, give their teſtimony in perfect uniſon with thoſe already quoted. It would require a volume to detail the recent evidence which confirms the view given by ancient writers of the atrocities either inſtigated or practiſed by European Slave-traders. The different witneſſes referred to under the preceding heads as having given evidence before the Privy Council and the Houſe of Commons, will be found to be equally explicit in affirming the point in queſtion.

Another ſource from which the Slave Trade is ſupplied with its victims, was ſtated by the Biſhop of LONDON to be *crimes real or pretended, including witchcraft and inſolvency*. And to ſuch a monſtrous perverſion of every ſpecies of judiciary proceeding, both civil and criminal, does this Trade give birth, in order that ſlaves may be procured to meet the demand of European avarice; that not only are perſons convicted of crimes ſold into ſlavery themſelves, but in many caſes, and particularly in the caſe of convictions for the imaginary crime of witchcraft, the children and relations of the convicts are doomed to ſhare their unhappy fate. In caſes of debt likewiſe, not only the debtor himſelf, but any of his family, or town, or nation, whom the creditor can ſeize, is liable to be ſold into an interminable foreign bondage.

The concurring teſtimony of the ancient writers proves that, formerly, condemnation to foreign ſlavery was not a puniſhment generally inflicted either for crimes or debt. See ARTUS of Dantzic, pp. 63 and 175, and Part vi. pp. 11 and 16. OGILBY, pp. 410, 503, and 536. BARBOT, p. 300. BOSMAN, pp. 141, 142, 171, and 346. NYENDAEL, who wrote in 1702, pp. 412, 419, and 429. LOYER, who wrote in 1701, p. 140. And SNELGRAVE, p. 158. None of theſe writers ſay any thing of puniſhment by Weſt India ſlavery under any alternative. But the immenſe increaſe of the Slave Trade which took place ſubſequently to the commencement of the laſt century (ſee note to p. 122, line 22, ſupra

ſupra p. 199,) had produced before the year 1730, a very different ſtate of things; for Mr. MOORE, who was factor to the Engliſh African Company at that time, thus expreſſes himſelf, (p. 42). "Since this trade has been uſed, "all puniſhments are changed into ſlavery. There being "an advantage in ſuch condemnation, they ſtrain for "crimes very hard in order to get the benefit of ſelling "the criminals. Not only murder, theft and adultery, "but every trifling crime is puniſhed in the ſame man-"ner." One man was brought to himſelf to be ſold for having ſtolen a tobacco-pipe; and another man, with his mother, three brothers and three ſiſters, were condemned to be ſold, becauſe in firing at a tyger he had accidentally killed a man. ATKINS, ſpeaking of adultery and theft, ſays, (p. 88,) "Trade has ſo infected them with covetouſ-"neſs and fraud, that the Chiefs will put ſnares both for "the one and the other, driving at the *profit* and not at "the *puniſhment* of a crime." Mr. NORRIS, himſelf a Slave-trader, and a delegate from Liverpool, in a pamphlet publiſhed on this ſubject (p. 15,) ſtates, that "few but "criminals are ſold to the Europeans, except priſoners "taken in war." Mr. ARNOLD, who was examined before the Privy Council, ſtates, as an inſtance of the mode of puniſhing inſolvency, that a trader had borrowed a gun of another trader to complete his aſſortment. He was unable however to return it on demand, and in conſequence of this was ſeized and ſold. The man was brought on board the veſſel in which Mr. ARNOLD was. (P. C. R. p. 43). See alſo P. C. R. pp. 15 and 17. The evidence before the Houſe of Commons proves, however, ſtill more inconteſtibly the extent and enormity of this practice. See Evidence in 1790, part ii, pp. 5, 80, 82, 141, 154, 205, 296, and 381; and in 1791, pp. 17 and 41. MUNGO PARK affirms (p. 296), that inſolvency is a common cauſe of ſlavery, and that the European traders are in the habit of ſeizing for their debts, and ſelling, not only the debtor himſelf, but any perſon of his family, and even any native of the ſame kingdom.

In proof of the various atrocities to which the Slave Trade gives birth, there remains to be adduced another volume of evidence which is but little known to the

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public, viz. the Evidence taken before the Houſe of Lords in 1799. All the Slave Traders who were examined on that occaſion concur in ſtating that all Slaves who are offered for ſale, and who are thought worth purchaſing, are bought by the European Traders without any enquiry as to the legality of their ſeizure (ſee pp. 14, 15, 39, 46, 57, and 90.) One of them in the courſe of his examination made the following very important admiſſion (p 98.) "The number of Slaves brought down uſually depends "on the number of ſhips that arrive for the purchaſe of "them: the black merchants in the interior parts ſome-"times wait bringing their Slaves down till they hear of "the arrival of Ships." Another ſtated (p. 59,) that "ſome were made Slaves for witchcraft;" and being queſtioned as to the mode of proceeding in the trial of perſons accuſed of witchcraft and other miſdemeanors, he made this anſwer. "By making them drink, what is termed "in the country Redwood*, and putting their hand into "boiling palm-oil: if it comes out unburnt they are "clear, if not, they are condemned." Another witneſs, not a Slave Trader, who had reſided ſix years in Africa, ſtates (p. 253,) that the Slave Trade expoſes the perſons of the natives to be kidnapped, and ſubjects them alſo to all the evils ariſing from the perverſion of juſtice. Of the practice of kidnapping he details a number of inſtances which came under his own obſervation, and which he ſtates to have been but a ſmall proportion of thoſe which he could have enumerated. A main ſource of ſlavery on the Windward Coaſt he affirmed to be, crimes falſely imputed, (p. 264) principally witchcraft. When Slaves are wanted, even a headach will be made a pretence, by the native chief, for accuſing ſome perſons of having practiſed witchcraft upon him. The perſons accuſed are immediately ſeized, and charged with the crime. If they deny it, the *onus probandi* lies with them, and they muſt eſtabliſh their innocence by drinking an infuſion of red bark, which, however, proves ſo generally fatal, that few

* See for a full account of this moſt iniquitous mode of trial, Winterbottom's Account of the Natives of Sierra Leone, publiſhed by Hatchard.

ſubmit to the ordeal. If they decline to drink the *red water* they are forthwith ſold for Slaves. An inſtance of this kind occurred while the witneſs happened to be at Cape Meſurado. The king of that diſtrict had made himſelf ill by drinking rum. He applied to the Doctor, as he is called, or Conjurer, to diſcover the cauſe of his malady. The Doctor found that three young women in the town had bewitched him. Theſe three young women were brought to the factory and ſold while he was there. He adds, "If I go into every inſtance of perſonal in-"ſecurity," produced by kidnapping and the perverſion of juſtice, "there will be no end of it." The profits of condemnation, he obſerves (p. 272) are divided between the chief, who is judge, and the accuſer; and on the condemnation of a perſon for witchcraft, and even for ſome other crimes, his children are ſold along with him. The African laws, with reſpect to debts, are ſtated to furniſh occaſion for many enormities. Large credits are given to Chiefs on an underſtanding that the Creditor ſhall be at liberty to ſieze the people of the Chief for payment of his debt (p. 267). The witneſs was aſſured that wars were undertaken in the interior purpoſely to procure Slaves; and that when the demand for Slaves was at a ſtand then wars in the interior ceaſed. (p. 271).

It is ſcarcely neceſſary to ſtate, that a very inconſiderable part of the evidence which might be produced in confirmation of the allegations of the Biſhop of London has even been alluded to in this note. For many of the references to old authors, the writer of this note is indebted to a valuable and intereſting work, entitled Hiſtorical Sketches of the Slave Trade, and of its effects in Africa, addreſſed to the people of Great Britain, by the Right Hon. Lord MUNCASTER, printed for Stockdale.

Page 119, line 35.

"It is ſaid we are doing the Slaves on the Coaſt of Africa a great kindneſs."] No man can read the preceding Notes to page 92, line 38, *ſupra* p. 190, and to page 112, line 22, *ſupra* p. 200, and remain of this opinion. But excluſively of the miſeries which are there detailed, the very terror which the poor Slaves experience in the anticipation of

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the fate which they ſuppoſe to await them in the Weſt Indies, is a ſource of wretchedneſs and deſpair, ſufficient infinitely to outweigh all the advantages (ſuppoſing them to be real) which it is pretended they derive from their purchaſe by Europeans. Park ſays (p. 319), that the Slaves repeatedly aſked him if his countrymen were cannibals, and he adds, that a deeply rooted idea that they are to be devoured produces great terror among them. The ſame author has given ſome ſhocking narratives of the ſufferings which the poor Slaves endure on their journey from the interior to the coaſt. It were endleſs to adduce proofs of the continuance of theſe ſufferings after they have been lodged in the hold of a Slave-ſhip. A view of the plate annexed to the Note to page 95, line 16, *ſupra* p. 192, is of itſelf ſufficient to prove this, without referring to the immenſe maſs of evidence on this part of the queſtion, which was produced both before the Privy Council and the Houſe of Commons. On the ſubject of Slaves being put to death if not purchaſed, ſee Note to page 92, line 38, *ſupra* p. 190.

Page 122, line 28.

The negroes were well treated where I had an opportunity of ſeeing them.] See note to page 38, line 33, *ſupra* p. 163; note to page 46, line 30, *ſupra* p. 166; and note to page 96, line 34, *ſupra* p. 192. It may be obſerved in this place, that a ſhort occaſional viſit to a Weſt India plantation, and the viſit of a naval officer (in which ſituation the Lord Chancellor was at this time) muſt almoſt always be of this deſcription, affords few or no opportunities of aſcertaining the real nature of colonial bondage. Mr. HERCULES ROSS, who reſided above 20 years in Jamaica, gives it as his opinion (Evid. Houſe of Commons, 1791, p. 261.) that a thorough knowledge of the treatment of Slaves was not likely to be obtained by ſuch viſits. He himſelf had often accompanied governors and admirals on ſuch viſits, when all poſſible care was naturally taken to keep every diſguſting object from their view.

Page 126, line 15.

Our anceſtors have ſhewn that they thought it a wiſe ſyſtem of policy to follow this Trade.] Our anceſtors did not know

its nature, or they would never have endured it. Queen ELIZABETH having heard that Captain HAWKINS had made a piratical kidnapping voyage to Africa (see note to page 117, line 21, *supra* p. 206), sent for him, and expreſſed her deep concern, leſt any of the African negroes ſhould be carried off *without their free conſent*, which ſhe declared would be deteſtable; and *could not fail to call down the vengeance of Heaven.* (Lord MUNCASTER'S Hiſtorical Sketches, p. 13.)

Page 128, line 8.

From the firſt ages of the world Slavery has exiſted.] But the SLAVE TRADE, as now carried on, has not exiſted for ages. (See note to page 112, line 22, *ſupra* p. 198.) Nor has Slavery, as it now exiſts in our Colonies, ever exiſted before in any part of the world. (See note to page 46, line 30, *ſupra* p. 166, and note to page 92, line 34, *ſupra* p. 192.)

Page 129, line 18.

One half of Africa is made up of Slaves.] See note to Page 112, line 22, *ſupra* p. 198.

Page 153, line 1.

He ſeems to think that the Slave Trade ſhould be aboliſhed in the Weſt Indies.] A preceding note, that to page 24, line 5, *ſupra* p. 158, contains ample proof of the hopeleſſneſs of any co-operation on the part of the Colonies in meaſures calculated to promote the Abolition of the Slave Trade. It may be proper here to add a few obſervations on the plan ſo ſtrongly urged in the courſe of theſe debates, as more likely to lead to that event than a direct prohibition; viz. an increaſing duty on the importation of Slaves. Thoſe who maintain the ſuperior efficacy of this plan are not perhaps aware that Weſt Indian ſpeculations partake much more of the gambling nature of a lottery, than of the regularity of our ordinary agricultural purſuits in this country. And as in the caſe of a lottery, it is notorious that adventurers are not deterred from the purchaſe of tickets by the very diſproportionate price which they bear, when compared with the chance of obtaining a prize; ſo neither would the increaſed price of Slaves be any material obſtacle to their purchaſe by our colonial adventurers.

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While, by the exaction of a greater quantity of labour, they could hope to add ſo materially to the produce of their eſtates, as to defray the increaſed charge of replacing the Slaves who might thus be worn out, they would, with difficulty, be induced to adopt thoſe plans of regular and ſyſtematic reform which are neceſſary to the natural increaſe of their gangs. The ſanguine expectations which all gamblers are prone to indulge, would unite with old habits, and inveterate prejudices, in leading them to adhere to the former ſyſtem. It is well known that though the price of Slaves has increaſed of late from about £30 to £70 ſterling a head, yet the Planters have not been diſcouraged by that immenſe riſe from continuing, and even enlarging their purchaſes. And it would hardly be deemed expedient to impoſe a duty which ſhould augment the price of Slaves, in a greater proportion than that in which it has been already augmented, without the intervention of any duty.

One great advantage of an abſolute prohibition over a ſyſtem of duties conſiſts in this, that the former reduces the Planter to the neceſſity of adopting immediate meaſures, for promoting the comfort and improvement of his Slaves, if he would prevent the decreaſe of his gang. But while the Planter continues to poſſeſs an alternative; while the means of recruiting his diminiſhed gang by purchaſe, though at a high rate, is ſtill open to him; he will not feel the ſame urgent neceſſity to change the fundamental principles of his plantation economy, and to adopt the breeding inſtead of the buying ſyſtem. It is a known fact, that little or no effect has been produced in inducing the planters, generally, to enter with ſpirit on the breeding ſyſtem, by the prodigious riſe in the price of Slaves which has taken place of late years. It is obvious that if they had begun even ſeriouſly to meditate a change of ſyſtem, one of the firſt ſteps which they would adopt would be that of endeavouring to ſupply the deficiency of their female population, by importing more women than men. The effect of ſuch a diſpoſition on the part of the Planters would neceſſarily be to raiſe the price of females, and proportionably to depreſs that of males. But how ſtands the fact? It is notorious that men ſtill ſell in the

the Iſlands for conſiderably more than women. This ſtatement, which the accounts of ſales of Slave cargoes during the laſt year place beyond queſtion, might derive confirmation, if confirmation were needed, from Dr. PINKARD's relation of a Slave ſale (*ſupra* p. 188,) where it appears that while the women were ſold at from 700 to 800 guilders, the men brought from 700 to 900, and ſome even more.

On the comparative practicability of the two plans, of prohibition and duty, ſomething has already been ſaid, (p. 158.) There is no reaſon to expect the co-operation of the Colonies in either plan, but on the contrary their determined counteraction. The latter plan, however, would depend much more on them for its efficiency than the former. In caſe of an abſolute prohibition it would become almoſt impoſſible for Slaves to be ſmuggled into the Colonies in Britiſh bottoms. No Britiſh ſhips would be allowed to clear out for that trade. If any, in defiance of the law, ſhould venture to viſit the coaſt of Africa, for the purpoſe of taking Slaves on board, they would be expoſed to ſeizure during every moment of their ſtay there. They would be expoſed to the ſame riſk during the whole of the middle paſſage, as well as after their arrival in the Weſt Indies; and conſidering the vigilance of our cruizers, and the rigour of our revenue laws, their eſcape would be hopeleſs. Under ſuch circumſtances, eſpecially as the prohibitory act would probably inflict, on thoſe who were found engaged in the trade, the puniſhment of felony, there is no room to apprehend that any Britiſh ſhips would venture to contravene the ſtatute. With reſpect to foreign ſhips, there would be the ſame means of preventing their intercourſe with our Iſlands, which have hitherto proved adequate to that purpoſe; and with all *friendly* maritime powers, arrangements might be made which would throw inſuperable obſtacles in the way of a contraband trade in Slaves: From the *hoſtile* powers nothing of this kind is to be apprehended.

It is obvious to remark, how greatly the facilities, and conſequently the temptations to ſmuggling, would be increaſed, in caſe of the ſubſtitution of the plan of a duty

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on importation. On this plan the vigilance of our numerous cruizers would be rendered uſeleſs; and it would be vain to expect that their place would be ſupplied by our coloniſts, who would naturally be more diſpoſed to violate than enforce a law which they deemed hoſtile to the intereſts, and injurious to the rights of the iſlands.

Any one who has reſided for a conſiderable time in the Weſt Indies, is able at firſt ſight to diſtinguiſh a newly imported negro from all others; ſo that the violation of a *prohibitory* law would be liable to detection, even after the Slaves cargo had eluded all the dangers already enumerated, and been landed in one of the iſlands. This check, however, would be uſeleſs under a ſyſtem of duties. For though a newly imported negro may be diſtinguiſhed from all other negroes, there is no way of diſtinguiſhing a new negro, for whom duty has been paid, from one who has been ſmuggled on ſhore.

In caſe a ſyſtem of duties ſhould be adopted, not only would the Planters be likely, as has been ſeen, to neglect thoſe means of improving the condition of their Slaves, which an abſolute prohibition would force them to adopt; but the ruin which they might bring on themſelves by that neglect, and by their perſiſting, notwithſtanding the augmentation of price, in the buying ſyſtem, would be attributed to the weight of the import duty. The hope of obtaining a diminution of its amount, perhaps its entire extinction, would lead to exaggerated repreſentations of hardſhip and to much clamour. And there could be no certainty that theſe might not, at ſome future period, influence his Majeſty's Miniſters and the Parliament to ſuſpend its execution entirely. The ſucceſs of a ſyſtem of duties, however, depends even in the opinion of its advocates, on its ſteady and perſevering progreſſion.

Other arguments might be urged in favour of the prohibitory ſyſtem, when compared with a ſyſtem of duties, drawn from the effects which would be likely to attend each, with a reference to the continent of Africa, as well as from their operation reſpectively, in the way of example, on foreign nations: but this would lead to a long diſcuſſion. One argument however muſt not be overlooked; which is, that the ſyſtem of duties ſeems to contemplate

template the Slave Trade rather as an inexpedient branch of commerce, to be diſcouraged and reſtrained; than as a blot on our national character to be effaced, and a crime to be puniſhed. The adoption of this ſyſtem would be ſaying in effect, that on the payment of a certain ſum of money, the Britiſh Parliament will grant a licenſe to its ſubjects, to practiſe, on the unoffending inhabitants of Africa, all thoſe enormities of which ſome of the foregoing Notes exhibit too faithful a picture; with the view of reducing them to that ſtate of cruel and perpetual bondage which we have ſeen to prevail in our Weſt India iſlands. Againſt ſuch a principle it is the duty of every friend to religion, to juſtice, and to humanity, as well as every friend to the true intereſts of our Colonies, and of the empire at large, moſt ſolemnly to proteſt.

FINIS.

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